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**Local government and civil society  
in a post-socialist Polish city:  
a case study of Poznań**

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Submitted in the fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of PhD

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**Abstract**

Between 1989 and 2007, Poland went through numerous reforms, the aim of which was to build a democratic country based on the rule of law. At the core of the multiple transition from the communist state to democracy was devolution which has been translated at different scales, national, regional and local. Of central importance were the local government reforms. Analyses of local outcomes of democratisation need to include the difficult to measure effects which manifest themselves through activities of local authorities and local communities. The aim of this thesis is to help fill the gap in understanding the processes and outcomes of the democratic transition by investigating the functioning of democracy at the local level, focusing on local self-government and its relations with civil society in the context of democratic consolidation in one of the major cities in Poland – Poznań and two of its community-based self-governing bodies called Estates which are accessory sub-local government units.

The main question of this thesis is what is democratic about Poznań's local government today. Here, the functioning of local representative democracy and citizens' inclusion in local decision making are key. It is argued that in a 'healthy' democracy the actual practices of local authorities should facilitate an increasing involvement of local residents in decision-making processes. Consequently I focused on local democratic practices trying to evaluate local government's responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability. In the light of the prevailing opinion that civil society in CEE has been weak, the effectiveness and efficiency of civil society in Poznań and its relations with the local authorities were explored. The study was based on a combination of qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) methods of research.

The research identifies that the activities of the local government of Poznań are symptomatic of the authorities' recognition of the need to be responsive, effective and accountable. Poznań's authorities have partners in civil society. Among these partners are organisations with a low level of formality, i.e. a community, neighbourhood and a group of residents which organise themselves to achieve their objectives. The environment (law, regulations and attitudes of local authorities) in which they operate was noted to be important to their activities and much effort has been put into upgrading the quality and intensity of the authorities' communication with local residents. The learning process has reached the stage at which the democratic system has begun to improve itself, a sign of a maturing democracy.

The thesis addresses a gap in the literature on the processes underpinning democratic consolidation in Poland. Its findings suggest that as the reformers of Polish local government in the years immediately following the overthrow of communist rule believed, local democracy and local democratic practices are an important component of the wider (national) project of democratic consolidation.

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### **Author's Declaration**

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Olga J. Mausch-Dębowska

## 1. Introduction

*We have been experiencing a turbulent period of transition, which involved changing the legal system, transforming institutions and verifying the basic values we respect. One of the most essential elements of the above is the building of local democracy. Without the direct involvement of local communities in the execution of power, no democratic state may exist. (Prof. Jerzy Regulski <sup>1</sup> 2002:13, trans. OM)*

This thesis explores how democratic consolidation has taken root in Poland in the twenty or so years since the end of communist rule through the prism of the practice of local democracy in Poznań. Central to the thesis is the structure and working of Poznań's local government and how civil society is built into local democratic practices. Unquestionably, since 1990 Poland has gone through democratic transition, an essential element of which has been the building of local democratic institutions. Polish decentralisation philosophy was based on territorial pluralism. The democratisation of a communist state was multi-functional, impinging on a wide range of activities. Decentralisation, too, had to address the question of scale, taking place at different levels of government. The impact and outreach of democratisation processes point to how their outcomes affected democratic transition in multiple ways. Thus, democratisation entails more than the extension of citizenship rights, the implementation of political change (*cf.* Grugel 2002, Potter, Goldblatt, Kiloh and Lewis 1997) and the transformation of a communist economy into a market economy. The democratic transition is multifaceted and its analysis needs to include concurrent changes including the emergence of new political parties and culture, democratic administrative structures, enforcement of a new legal culture and the functioning of civil society (e.g. Crawford 1997, Nelson 1993, Przeworski 1995). These changes are interdependent and interwoven and thus fluid. They entail procedural aspects of democracy such as the redesigning of the administration so as to warrant the implementation of a democratic legislature and to ensure and protect citizens' rights including their exercise of democratic rights (Fowkes 1995, Smith 1999). Given the complexity of democratisation processes, an obvious question arises with the methods and extent by which they have been implemented. But any such academic endeavour needs to be grounded in actual practice, the central purpose motivating this thesis.

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Jerzy Regulski was the 'chief architect' of local government reform in Poland. He was Chairman of the Council for State System Reforms of the Prime Minister (1998), former Senator (1989-91), Minister in charge of the local government reform (1989-90), Ambassador to the Council of Europe (1992-97). Professor Regulski is President of the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy.

The transformation of Poland started in the 1990s with two reforms: one introduced a market economy and the other introduced a new concept of local government and a new administrative territorial division of the country. In the early phases of the transition, local institutions of representative democracy were transformed. Decentralisation resulted in the transfer of administrative responsibilities from the central authorities to the local level. This changed the territorial organisation of the state and was aimed at eliminating the old regime structures and procedures. The objective was not just to redraw the political map but to recast the political actors taking part in the working of the state. More actors were to be recognised and established to make democracy work. Further, the reformers of Polish local government wanted to use the energy of local civil society as a means of bolstering local democratic practice. This gave rise to the possibility of creating democratic institutions at the sub-local government level not as an obstacle to the working of the newly implemented system of local government, but rather as a means of strengthening the emerging democratic system.

It could be argued that the democratic reforms affecting local government were at the core of Poland's complex transition as they targeted the weakest link in the centralised system, i.e. they focused on the local level where the performance of authorities is most relevant to the everyday lives of citizens, and where contacts between the (local) state and the citizen are not just frequent but frequently questioned precisely because they impinge so directly on the everyday quality of life.

The basic approach taken in this thesis, the research questions posed and their relationship to the wider processes of democratic transformation in Poland are summarized in Table 1.1.



Table 1.1 Trends defining democratic consolidation and research questions

Trends defining democratic consolidation	Research Questions
(Re)constituting a system of local government/democracy as means of countering political centralisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What has been the rationale for (re)creating a system of local government in Poland?</li> <li>- How has the devised system sought to ensure its democratic operation e.g. through the elections and the adoption of representative democracy?</li> <li>- How has the system sought to ensure that local government cannot be ‘captured’ by ‘non-democratic’ political groups?</li> <li>- What criteria can be derived to identify the working of local government and democracy in practice?</li> </ul>
Exploring local government and local democracy in practice	<p>Based on the experience in Poznań:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is local government/democracy perceived by political elites and voters?</li> <li>- How democratic are local (formal) political processes in the city in terms of the criteria identified?</li> </ul>
Spreading democratic participation through public participation – the role of (local) civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is civil society in Poland to be defined?</li> <li>- What types of civil society become involved in political processes in Poznań? Who becomes involved? Why?</li> <li>- What kinds of (neighbourhood) activities does this involve?</li> <li>- In what ways does the City authority foster local civil society?</li> <li>- What is the role of Estates Councils in Poznań as institutionalized forms of local participation? Does such participation function as part of civil society or as part of the formal structure of government?</li> <li>- How vibrant is civil society in Poznań?</li> <li>- What is its contribution to local democratic processes?</li> </ul>

## 1.1. Analytical themes

The process of democratisation is played out at different scales, national, regional, local and sub-local, including in the latter the neighbourhoods in which citizens live. The early stages of the Polish transformation have been documented, though much of this analysis has been conducted at the national scale. Though there is an obvious need to chart the process of economic and political transformation nationally since 1989 Poland has been transformed in a number of respects - but how such processes are played out varies geographically – hence the importance of the local. In this thesis the outcomes of the transition at the local level are investigated. My analysis of local democracy practices focuses on local self-government and its relations with civil society, helping to fill a gap in the understanding of political processes in Poland after 1989. Empirically, the study focuses on the functioning of local democracy in one of the major cities of Poland -

Poznań, and two of its community-based accessory and self-governing bodies called Estates which are sub-local government units<sup>2</sup>. The field research was carried out in 2007.

A case study approach promises a detailed analysis and facilitates an evaluation of the enrooting of democracy in a post-communist state. Democracy may be viewed as a system of government as well as a condition of society and I argue that the condition of local democracy gives essential insight into the enrooting of democratic practices. Democratic consolidation depends on both the frame of the system and active involvement of citizens. For a democracy to be 'healthy', the actual practices of local authorities should facilitate increasing involvement of local residents in decision-making processes. The necessities of healthy representative democracy e.g. freely elected local authorities, are the basics of a democratic system. But a healthy democracy is dependent on more than its electoral legitimacy and will be attentive to the improvement of its working practices: it should have self-improving and self-reinforcing qualities. Without them the role of local government is reduced to local administration. These qualities are reflected though local government's responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability (e.g. Mellor and Copperthwaite 1987, Miller, Dickson and Stocker 2000, Benett 1997, Soós 2001).

The active involvement of citizens is also a sign of a healthy democracy, being a check on the working of elected authorities. A key means of exercising that control is the use of democratic institutions by civil society. Civil society as organised social life is described with such adjectives as voluntary, self-generating, self-supporting (*cf.* Diamond 1994:5), self-governing and pluralistic. I view civil society as an ongoing process. That is why while trying to investigate democratic consolidation in Poland, I have tried to answer the question about the necessary conditions the society needs to meet to be considered civil. To do so, I investigated in what ways civil society is effective, i.e. whether Poznań authorities have partners in civil society, what activities are considered civic and who tends to be involved in local affairs. This led to doing research on two of Poznań's self-governing Estates as examples of civil society's institutions and on organisations with low levels of formality, i.e. communities, neighbourhoods and local group of residents.

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<sup>2</sup> In 2006 it was observed that there was very limited data on sub-local government units in Poland (Matczak 2006:150).

## 1.2. Thesis structure

The structure of this thesis corresponds to its objective, i.e. an evaluation of democratic consolidation in Poland, by reviewing the literature on democratisation and civil society (chapter 2) and local government (chapter 3) and investigating practices of widely understood local democracy in Poznań, i.e. the functioning of representative democracy (chapter 5) and the effectiveness of civil society (chapter 6). Chapters 2 and 3 create the theoretical background to this thesis. In chapter 4 the methodology used to answer my research questions is described. In chapter 7 my research conclusions are presented.

Chapter 2 presents the concept of democratic consolidation and focuses on the development of civil society and local democracy in Poland. First, the concept is discussed. As Solidarity is frequently identified with Polish civil society and the condition of civil society in postcommunist countries is often judged to be poor, the features of civil society are discussed to arrive at its working definition. This chapter includes a review of the literature on the relationship between civil society and political society in the context of the unstable Polish political arena and differences in the emphasis put on the main values of local democracy in the Central and East European countries. In the last part the focus is on the reconstruction of local government in the region.

In chapter 3 ideas and developments relevant to positioning modern Polish local government in historical and recent contexts are reviewed. Firstly the functioning of Polish local government under communism is presented to describe the advancement of centralisation which is relevant to the path of decentralisation after 1989. As one of the features of Poland's new democracy is territorial pluralism, in the next part the history of modern thinking about local government and the Polish debate on the position of local government between 1918-1939 are briefly reviewed. The general focus is on five attributes of 'a healthy democracy' and local government, that is on its autonomy, representativeness, accountability, effectiveness, and responsiveness. Finally, post-1989 Polish local government reforms aiming at the decentralisation of the country are presented together with their objectives. This part focuses on the introduction of new laws and their corrective amendments.

Chapter 4 is devoted to methodological considerations underpinning my research. It presents the argument for combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in a mixed methods study. The techniques used in my research and the justification for their use are

presented in detail including the case study approach, questionnaires and interviews. The rationale of purposeful sampling of local residents and semi-structured interviewing of officials is explained. Considerations on the role of the researcher and my influence on the research, the process of transcription and translation of the interview data and data triangulation are included.

Chapters 5 and 6 provide detailed case study evidence analysing local democracy in Poland using the example of the functioning of local government and civil society in the city of Poznań. In both, the functioning and position of Poznań's Estates are analysed. Those two chapters are based on interviews, mainly with local government officials and on statistical analyses of questionnaires conducted among residents of two Poznań Estates.

Chapter 5 focuses on the functioning of representative democracy in Poznań, i.e. elections and the operations of government at local and sub-local levels. Attention is drawn to the reasons for choosing the system of Estates. The functioning of Poznań's self-government is analysed tracing its actual responsiveness, accountability and effectiveness. Responsiveness to local residents' needs is discussed in terms of local authorities' willingness to delegate some of its responsibilities to sub-local communities. Accountability is discussed by tracing electors' preferences in the absence of traditional established political parties. This is followed by turnout analyses of elections in Poland, in Poznań and in the two Poznań's Estates. Finally, an assessment of the responsiveness and effectiveness of Poznań's local government authorities is offered. Emphasis is put on the nature of the communication between authorities and residents: its channels, patterns and quality, and on residents' evaluation of the performance of local authorities.

Chapter 6 aims at assessing the condition and quality - thus effectiveness - of civil society in Poznań. The focus is on the environment created by local authorities which is highly relevant to the involvement and operations of civil society organisations in public life. First attitudes towards *civil society* in the context of local democracy are investigated and my working definition of the term is put to test. In addition to investigating relevant procedures, communication patterns are taken on board again to further evaluate local government's accountability and effectiveness. The co-habitation patterns of Poznań's authorities and civil society organisations are discussed next in the context of City grants awarded to NGOs. Finally the functioning of self-governing Estates as a form of organised social life is analysed. Their effectiveness is reviewed in terms of their position in the

system of self-government, i.e. the actual impact of their resolutions and their financial resources, and residents' participation in community activities as an indicator of the quality of civil society. Social cohesion is investigated including interest-based activities of neighbourhoods and individual residents. This chapter closes by reviewing the situation of Estates in 2007 in the context of their possible reform.

The theoretical and empirical chapters aim to offer a complex and extended record of the evolution and current outcomes of democratic transformation in Poland demonstrating that relationships between local authorities and local civil society are at the core of actual democratic practices. This research, based on a case study of the city of Poznań, points to areas previously neglected and to ungrounded generalisations based on applying 'standards' of mature democracies that tend to approach democracy and civil society as given, i.e. firmly established. My analysis of democratic consolidation points to a need to take a different perspective, i.e. to approach democracy and civil society as an interacting environment with numerous variables. Consequently, an ideal condition remains a postulate, and generalisations need to be carefully drawn as the meaning of terms commonly used in them – civil society in particular - do not have a sharply defined content and thus call for revision.

In the remaining part of this chapter the intention is to introduce the city used to explore these ideas, Poznań, and its constituent neighbourhoods.

### **1.3. The City of Poznań: background information**

The City of Poznań is a worthy object of research if only for three reasons: its position in the country, its socio-demographic profile and internal differences, and the structure of its local government.

Its position in the territorial administrative structure makes it an important centre. In Poland there are 3 tiers of local government. They are established at the level of voivodship (province, 3<sup>rd</sup> tier), powiat (2<sup>nd</sup> tier) and *gmina* (1<sup>st</sup> tier). The City of Poznań is a self-governing unit and the capital of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship (see Figure 1.1)<sup>3</sup> and

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<sup>3</sup> The national public administration, within the city and voivodship, falls within the mandate of the Voivod of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship. The voivod is a representative of the Council of Ministers - the Cabinet - and is held responsible for carrying out state policies in the voivodship. As the capital of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship, Poznań is the seat of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship Assembly (*sejmik wojewódzki*, 3rd tier of

of two Poznań Poviats, one of them being the Poznań Region (rural) Powiat<sup>4</sup> neighbouring with the City of Poznań.

The Wielkopolskie Voivodship is one of the largest regions in Poland. In the terms of its area (29,825 km<sup>2</sup>) it is the second largest in the country, and the third most densely populated. Its area is comparable to Belgium and its population is bigger than that of Latvia and slightly smaller than the population of Ireland or Lithuania. The City of Poznań has a population of nearly 0.5 million (1.49% of the population of Poland) and the combined status of an urban (municipal) poviat and of a *gmina* due to its size.

Poznań long used to be divided administratively into districts and most of the data available is on districts. In Poznań the concept of districts was replaced with that of Estates. The first Estate was established in 1991. In what follows I refer to former districts unless the name of an area is qualified with the word *Estate*.

### Characterising Poznań

Poznań is located on the Warta River in West-Central Poland. It is one of the oldest and demographically largest Polish cities making it an important historical and cultural centre of great importance to the Polish economy and to higher education (*cf.* Parysek and Mierzejewska 2006). Poznań lies 288 km from Berlin and half way between Berlin and Warsaw<sup>5</sup>. It is a historical trade centre located on one of the most important transit routes connecting Western and Eastern Europe.

Poznań is Poland's fifth largest city with a population of over 567,882 inhabitants (2005) after Warsaw (1.7 million), Łódź (764,000), Kraków (757,000) and Wrocław (635,000). In 1990 the population of Poznań was the highest ever<sup>6</sup>. In recent decades the population of the city has been declining although at a low rate (see Table 1.2).

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territorial/local government, regional) and its Board (*zarząd*), both chaired by the Voivodship's Marshal (*marszałek województwa*).

<sup>4</sup> Poznań is also the seat of the Poznań Region (*ziemski*, rural) Powiat's (*Powiat Poznański*) Assembly (*sejmik powiatowy*, 2nd tier, sub-regional) and its Council (*rada*), both chaired by the Staroste (*starosta*).

<sup>5</sup> Geographical location of Poznań is marked by the following coordinates: 52°17'34'' to 52°30'27'' N and 16°44'08'' to 17°04'28'' E. The longest geographical length in straight line between the city borders is 26 km NW-SE, the shortest is 10.9 km NE-SW. Poznań is located 161 km to the Western, 454 km to the Eastern and 236 km to the Southern boarder of Poland.

<sup>6</sup> Population of Poznań between 1946 and 1980: 1946 – 268.000; 1950 - 320.700; 1960 - 408.100; 1970- 471.900; 1980 - 552.900. Data from: Poznańczyk, 'Z pasją o Poznaniu' [With passion about Poznań] <http://www.poznanczyk.com/poznanczanie.html>, accessed 20.11.2010.

Figure 1.1 Location of Poznań on a map of Poland with administrative division to voivodship level including the four other largest cities in Poland



Source: Administrative map of Poland

Table 1.2 Population of Poznań, 1990-2006

Year	Population
1990	590,049
1995	581,772
1999	576,899
2000	582,254
2001	579,343
2002	577,117
2003	574,125
2004	570,778
2005	567,882
2006	564,951

Source: *Główny Urząd Statystyczny* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office], '*Baza demograficzna*' [Demographic Database], <http://www.stat.gov.pl/demografia/index.html>, accessed 20.01.2008

Population growth between 1946-1990 was due to the territorial expansion of the city and industrialisation processes (Szymańska, Grzelat-Kotulska and Hołowiecka 2009).

The depopulation after 1990 has resulted from a decline in migration from the country to towns, a declining birth rate and the movement of residents and migrants to the suburbs. Parysek and Mierzejewska (2006:296) argue that:

The processes are interdependent, because the declining natural increase reflects not only the general demographic tendency, but also the ageing of the urban population, the latter greatly affected by the fall in migration to towns (the migrants were mostly young people) and the outflow of young city dwellers to the suburbs. (Parysek and Mierzejewska 2006:296)

In economic terms Poznań is one of the strongest cities in Poland. In terms of GDP it comes second after Warsaw. In 2006 its GDP was 31.8 million PLN and 56,200 PLN per inhabitant (202% of the average for Poland and 191.5% of the average for the Wielkopolskie Voivodship) Polish Central Statistical Office henceforth GUS). It is one of four voivodship capitals with the highest indicator of investment attractiveness and the lowest investment risk (*cf.* Smetkowski, Jałowiecki and Gorzelak 2009). Poznań is an important financial centre with the head offices and branches of over 40 banks as well as numerous insurance companies. Poznań comes second, after Warsaw, in terms of international business concentration. The largest foreign investors currently operating there include: Volkswagen, GlaxoSmithKline, Bridgestone, Wrigley, SABMiller, Dalkia Group, Beiersdorf, Exide, Kronospan Holding, Kimball Electronics Group, Carlsberg, Duni, Franklin Templeton, Microsoft, MAN, Bertelsmann, Roche, CIBER. The expenditure of foreign investors in the city between 1990 and 2004 was 4.3 billion US dollars and it grew to 6.3 in 2009 which means the city has done well since 1989. Poznań has attracted investors by its location and human capital and “efficient measures taken by its authorities” (Parysek and Mierzejewska 2006:302).

As a measure of the economic vibrancy of the city unemployment in Poznań has been markedly lower than it is regionally *and* nationally. At the end of June 2007, the unemployment rate in Poland was 12.3%, in the Wielkopolskie Voivodship it was 9.2% but in Poznań it was only 3.9% (GUS data). In subsequent months, during which the economy as a whole was improving, rates of unemployment fell, but disproportionately in those areas, such as Poznań, where it was already low (at the end of January 2008 some 11.7% of the population of labour age was unemployed, a relatively small fall over 6 months previously whereas in Poznań, at 2.8%, the decline over the same period had been proportionately much larger). What needs to be said is that recorded levels of unemployment tend to be smaller in the cities (with the exception of Łódź) - for



comparison, in Warsaw the unemployment rate was 2.9%, in Katowice 3.3%, Gdańsk 3.7%, Kraków 3.9%, Wrocław 4.6% and Łódź 8.8%. Even so, Poznań's relatively low unemployment rate is a measure of the economic vitality of the city.

A key factor in the economic status of Poznań as well as one affecting the city in more social terms is its role as a leading scientific and academic centre providing higher education to over 140,000 students. The city has the highest number of students per 1000 inhabitants (251 students) in Poland. There are 25 HEIs, including 8 state (public) and 17 private, and 50 research centres. Three quarters of students come from other parts of Poland and from over 60 countries. The biggest academic centre in Poznań is Adam Mickiewicz University (in 2009 ranking 3rd in Poland<sup>7</sup>).

Educational levels in the main Polish metropolises tend to be much higher than in the rest of the country. According to the 2002 Census in Poland the percentage of people who completed higher education was only 9.9% (13 years of age<sup>8</sup> and above). According to the same Census, in Poznań, in the population aged 13 and above, 19.6% had higher education<sup>9</sup>, 40.3% secondary school education, 19% vocational education and 18% primary school education<sup>10</sup>. The data presented in Table 1.3 show the education of the population of Poznań in 2002 in age group of 13 and above in former city districts. The least educated population lives in the district of Wilda. It should be noticed that differences among former districts result from their distinct age structure, size and the demographic structure of the migration stream directed to particular former city districts, and have historical reasons, i.e. Wilda has long been a heavily industrialised district.

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<sup>7</sup> *Perspektywy* Magazine, HEI Ranking, [http://www.perspektywy.pl/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1434&Itemid=480](http://www.perspektywy.pl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1434&Itemid=480), accessed 09.11.2009. For explication of the status of the *Perspektywy* Foundation, <http://www.perspektywy.org/>, accessed 09.11.2009.

<sup>8</sup> In Poland people usually complete their secondary education at the age of 18. The Census design ignores this fact.

<sup>9</sup> According to Jałowicki (2005), 23.3% of the citizens of Warsaw have higher education and about 20% in Kraków, Wrocław and Poznań.

<sup>10</sup> The Eurostat data for 2005 reads that in Poland the percentage of the population aged 20-24 having completed at least upper secondary education was 91.1% (EU 71.4%). Eurostat, 'Students by ISCED level, age and sex', [http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ\\_enr11tl&lang=en](http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=educ_enr11tl&lang=en), accessed 25.04.2008.

Table 1.3 Population of Poznań in 2002 in age group of 13+ by level of education and former city districts without untraced education level

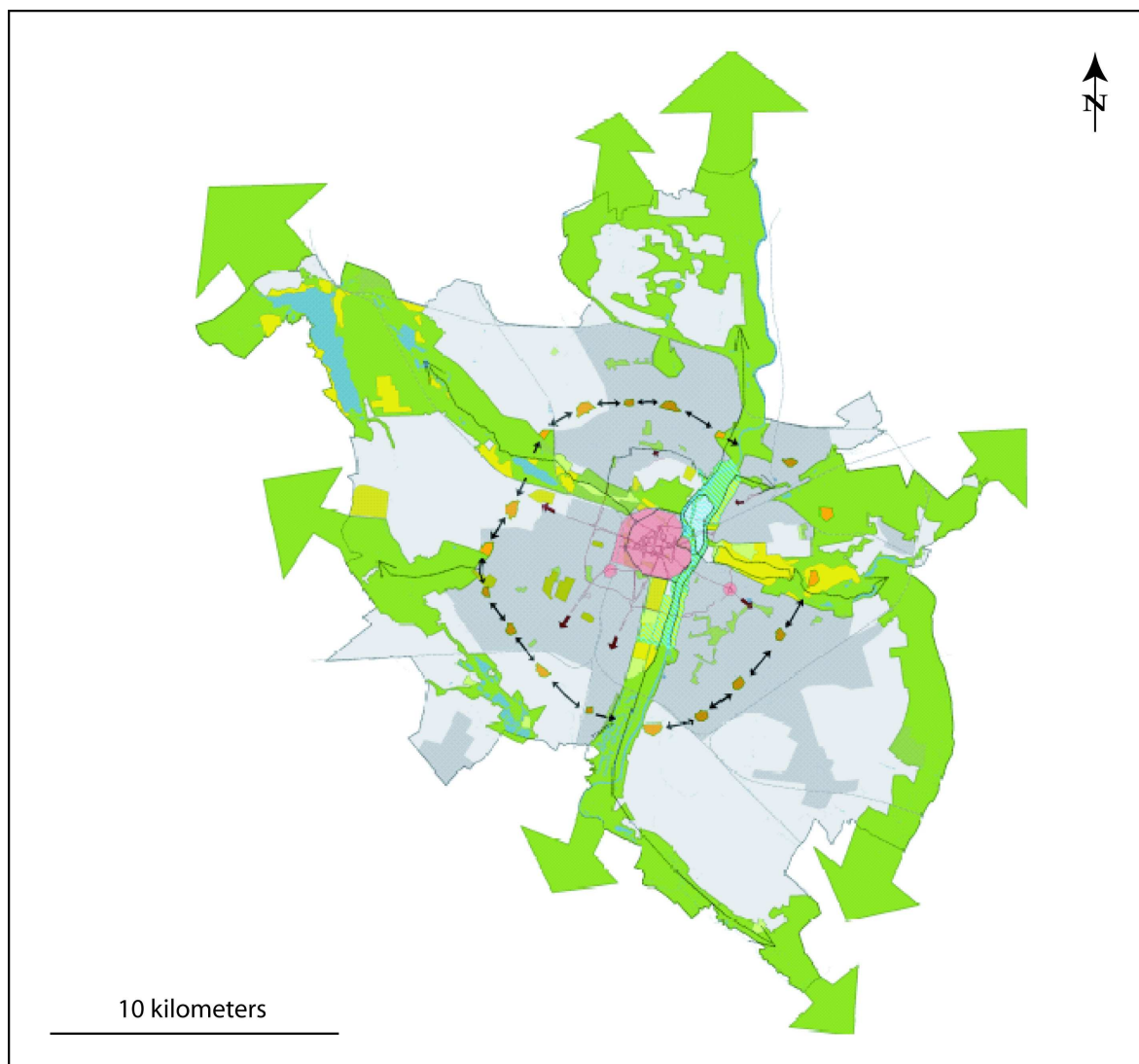
Specification	Higher education (%)	Secondary school education including community colleges (%)	Vocational school education (%)	Primary school education (%)	Uncompleted primary school education (%)
Poznań	19.6	40.3	19.0	18.0	1.3
Grunwald	20.4	39.7	19.4	18.6	1.3
Jeżyce	21.6	38.8	17.0	18.2	1.4
Nowe Miasto	17.5	42.1	20.3	17.7	1.4
Stare Miasto	21.3	41.5	17.2	16.6	1.1
Wilda	15.2	36.6	22.1	21.1	1.6

Source: \_\_\_\_ (2005) '*Miasto Poznań w świetle wyników NSP 2002*' [City of Poznań in the light of the Census 2002], Poznań: *Główny Urząd Statystyczny* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office] and and author's own calculations.

### Characterising Poznań – its internal makeup and divisions

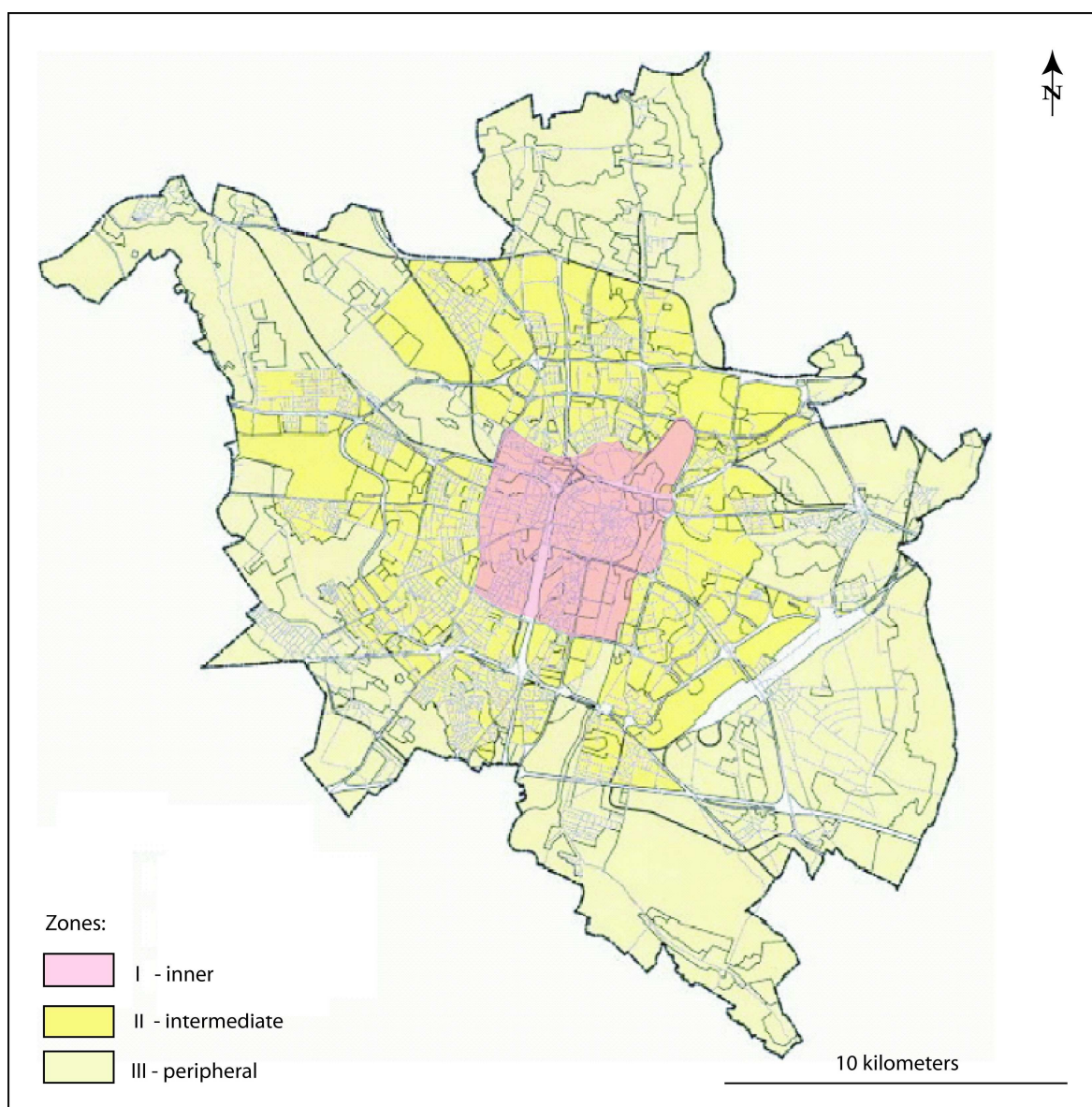
Poznań has a distinctive structure and layout, the product of its growth historically, both distant and more recent. Over the longer historical duration the city's concentric geometry has been reinforced by medieval fortifications and its growth. More recently, beginning in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, successive rounds of urban planning have reinforced the concentricity but combining this with a star-shaped morphology. In 1914 the German town planner Richard Stüben created a star-shaped concentric layout for the city. After the First World War Poznań expanded further. The second attempt at implementing the star-shaped concentric layout took place in 1934, when Professor Władysław Czarnecki redesigned the city plan on Howard's concept of city-gardens. After the Second World War Czarnecki's design was modified and the concept of 10 green wedges and green rings was reduced to the previously mentioned 4 green wedges and two green rings of Prussian fortifications (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2 Prussian fortifications in Poznań marked with green wedges



Source: Green areas - General spatial development plan of the city of Poznań 2008, *Miejska Pracownia Urbanistyczna* [Poznań Town Planning Unit], [http://www.mpu.pl/studium2008/studium/C\\_Synteza/Zalaczniki\\_graficzne/1\\_model\\_ZIELEN.pdf](http://www.mpu.pl/studium2008/studium/C_Synteza/Zalaczniki_graficzne/1_model_ZIELEN.pdf), accessed 20.02.2008.

Figure 1.3 Zones in the spatial–functional structure of Poznań



Source: Zones in the spatial-functional structure of Poznań - General spatial development plan of the city of Poznań 1999, *Miejska Pracownia Urbanistyczna*, [Poznań Town Planning Unit], <http://www.mpu.pl/studium99/Mapa11/Map11.pdf>, accessed 30.01.2008.

The borders of Poznań have changed very little since 1986 and the city area equals 261 km<sup>2</sup>. The built-up areas constitute 43% of the city. In the North, East and South, Poznań is surrounded by forests and in the West there is the Kierskie Lake which all create natural borders for the urbanised city structures.

The development plan of the city of 1999 divided Poznań into three main development zones (see Figure 1.3). The area of the first, the inner zone, is virtually co-terminous with the 1900 borders of Poznań. It is a densely built area with a high concentration of commercial services, tenement housing from different periods and narrow streets. There is

a possibility of developing residential functions within the zone, however its main purpose has been and is linked to the development of commercial functions. The second intermediate zone is dominated by tall blocks of flats and single-family housing. The building density is less than in the inner city with more green areas and wide transportation routes. In the Eastern, South-Eastern and Southern part of the zone numerous industrial establishments are located. It is planned that within the zone both residential and industrial functions will develop further as long as they do not disturb one another. The third, peripheral zone has a structure of former villages which were included within the borders of Poznań after its expansion. The older buildings have a rural character but agricultural functions are vanishing and the zone is being transformed to new residential areas.

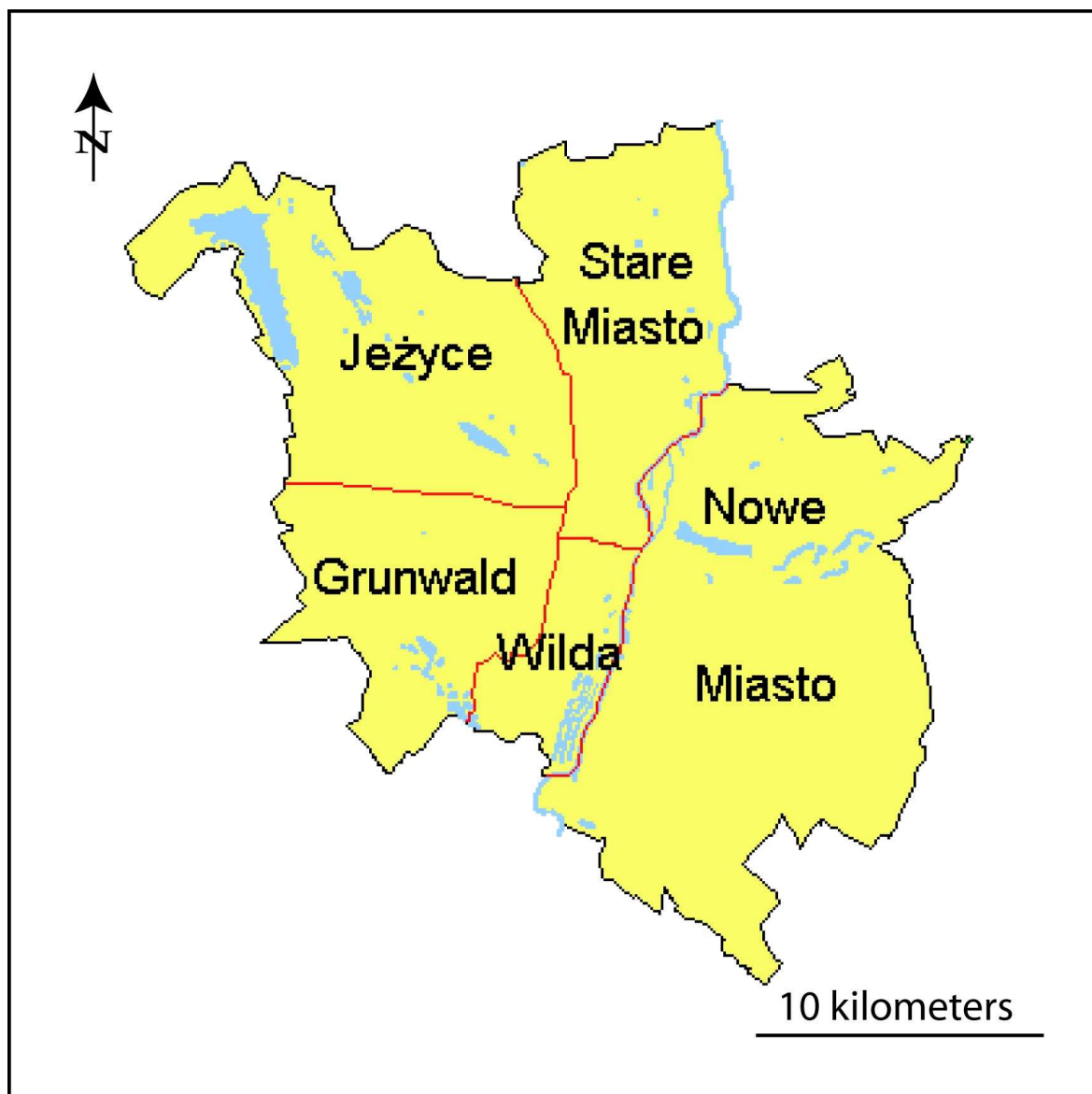
Until 1990 the city of Poznań was divided into 5 districts (see Figure 1.4 and Table 1.4): *Grunwald*, *Jeżyce*, *Stare Miasto* and *Wilda* on the left river bank and *Nowe Miasto* on the right river bank. This division is still commonly recognized and as a territorial demarcation is used by a number of state institutions such as the Inland Revenue, GUS as well as local government representatives. After 1990 the districts were replaced by Accessory Units (Estate Councils).

Table 1.4 Area and population of Poznań and its former districts in 2005 as of 31 December 2005

Specification	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	% of the city area	Population	% of the city population	Per 1 km <sup>2</sup>
City of Poznań	261	100	567,882	100	2173
Grunwald	36	13.8	123,712	21.8	3418
Jeżyce	58	22.2	81,033	14.3	1400
Nowe Miasto	105	40.2	142,309	25	1354
Stare Miasto	47	18	158,032	27.8	3354
Wilda	15	5.7	62,796	11	4175

Source: \_\_\_\_ (2006) 'Wielkopolskie Voivodship: Subregions, powiats, gminas', Poznań: Główny Urząd Statystyczny (GUS) [Central Statistical Office] (CD).

Figure 1.4 Former administrative division of the city of Poznań: traditional districts of Poznań (former city districts)



Source: Former administrative division of the city of Poznań, [Poznań Region Powiat](http://Poznań Region Powiat), [www.powiat-poznan.info/powiat](http://www.powiat-poznan.info/powiat), accessed 23.01.2008.

The Estates selected for research, *Św. Łazarz* and *Ławica*, are located in **Grunwald** which is in zones II and III and is the second most densely populated area in Poznań. Grunwald is dominantly residential. In its eastern and northern parts, closest to the inner zone, quarters of tenant houses from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century are located. Tall blocks of flats are located in the eastern part of Grunwald to the border with the inner zone (I). The western and southern parts of Grunwald are dominated by single-family housing. Compared to other areas of the city Grunwald has few industrial buildings though in the northern part of the district a sizeable space was given over to the Poznań International Fair Ltd.

**Jeżyce** district is the second largest area. It has mainly residential and recreational functions. Its south-western part is dominated by green areas and the Kierskie and Rusałka lakes. A large part in the South is used by Ławica Airport.

**Nowe Miasto** (New Town) is the largest district in Poznań. Its population is the second biggest but the population density is the lowest. Its functions are diverse (housing, industry, commerce, recreation). It includes the oldest historic part of Poznań - Ostrów Tumski with the Cathedral. In the southern part the military airport is located which is the base for F-16 aircrafts.

**Stare Miasto** (Old Town) district has the biggest population. In the district administrative, educational, cultural, commercial and banking functions prevail. Stare Miasto plays an important tourist function as this is the location of the old medieval architectural complex, i.e. the historic Old Market.

**Wilda** is the smallest and most densely populated former district. The dominant function of this area has been heavy industry.

### **Characterising Poznań – its governmental structure**

In 1990 Poznań became a *gmina* (1st tier), i.e. the basic administrative unit in the Polish system. In Poland, after changes completed in 2003, 65 cities have the status of urban (municipal) poviats (*powiat grodzki*, 2nd tier), among them the city of Poznań<sup>11</sup>. The status of the urban powiat means that the range of responsibilities and competences of the city covers those delegated to the powiat (2nd tier) and the *gmina* (1st tier). The local government reform of 2002 increased the city budget to finance tasks of the (municipal) powiat in addition to those of the *gmina*. Poznań authorities have taken over the supervision of the integrated administration in the City of Poznań realising the national government responsibilities and the Mayor of Poznań is, in some cases, the local representative of the State Treasury.

The legislative body of the City of Poznań is the elected City Council which is also a controlling authority whose term of office is 4 years. There are 37 members of the council. The local council works in a cyclical system of sessions which usually take place once a

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<sup>11</sup> In the Wielkopolskie Voivodship, apart from Poznań, also Kalisz, Konin and Leszno have the urban powiat status.

month. The sessions are open to the public and can be watched live on the Internet<sup>12</sup>. Local government resolutions/acts must be approved by a majority vote with 50% of City Councillors present and cover all public issues relevant to the residents of Poznań apart from those which, according to national laws, are the competence of other authorities. The Council sets local by-laws, passes budgets and inspects their execution, decides on local taxes and charges on the grounds of existing legislature and adopts resolutions on property rights. The realisation of particular responsibilities of the City Council is supported by the Council Chairperson and Commissions that supervise the actions of the executive authorities, i.e. the Mayor of Poznań and the City Hall, and of accessory units (Estate Councils). In addition to permanent commissions, in special cases the Council can form an *ad hoc* standing commission to deal with a particular issue<sup>13</sup>.

The executive body of the City of Poznań centres on the directly elected mayor (*Prezydent*). The mayor heads the City Hall and the two execute the City Council's resolutions. At the same time the City Mayor is responsible for preparing drafts of local government acts, budget projects and the budget execution/realisation. Representatives of the city executive body, i.e. the Mayor of Poznań (elected), the Mayor's Deputies, the City Office Secretary and the Treasurer can take part in the City Council sessions and present opinions or propose motions. The Mayor's duties, as the Head of the City Hall, include the management of communal properties and employment of heads of municipal organisational units. The Mayor's Deputies, the City Secretary and the City Treasurer are responsible for the functioning of departments within the City Hall (Figure 1.5). The organisational structure of the City Hall of Poznań shows that in 2008 there were 32 departments and other organisational units within the institution. The City Office Management Department – the organisational unit responsible for Estates – is accountable to the Mayor and the City Office Secretary. (See Figure 1.5 - the red line.)

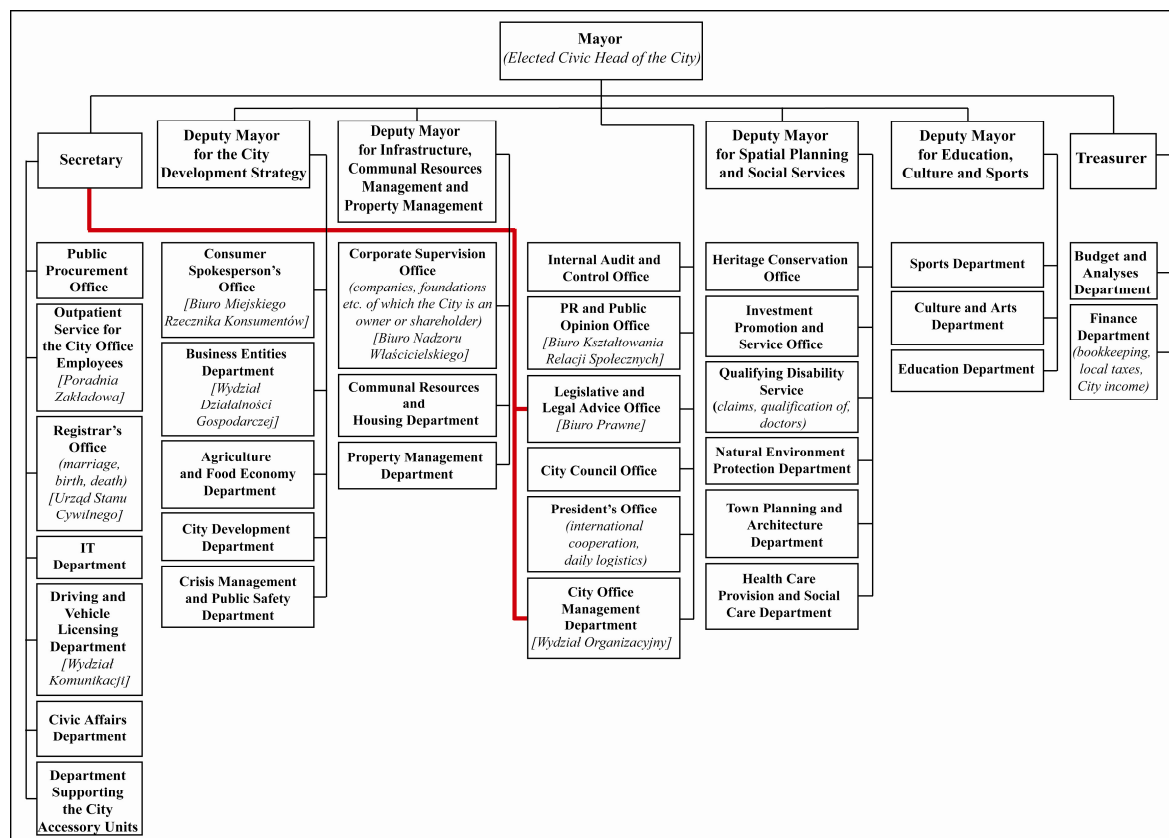
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<sup>12</sup> Sessions may be watched live at: *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Miasta Poznania* [Public Bulletin of the City of Poznań], '*Obrady Rady Miasta Poznania na żywo w Internecie*', [Sittings of the Council of Poznań live on the Internet] <http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/live.html>, accessed 13.01.2010.

<sup>13</sup> For the 2006-2010 voting term, the following Commissions have been set: Security and Public Order Commission, Municipal Utilities and Housing Policy Commission, Sports and Tourism Commission, Town Planning Policy Commission, Security and Public Order Commission, Local Government Commission for the accessory units (Estate Councils), Culture and Science Commission, Municipal Commission for Estate Elections, Education Commission, Budget and Finances Commission, and Family, Social Policy and Public Health Commission.



Figure 1.5 The organisational structure of the City Hall of Poznań in 2008



Source: Adapted from Public Bulletin of the City of Poznań [*Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Miasta Poznania*]<sup>14</sup>

In addition, City Hall is responsible for fully or partly financing other municipal (ownership) units such as those maintaining public utilities, cultural institutions, some hospitals and out-patient's surgeries, schools and some commercial companies (shares).

In short, the structure and functioning of the Council of the City of Poznań and of City Hall meet those of similar bodies in other democratic states. A directly elected City Mayor, who is head of the executive authority, may have a stronger position than the Chairperson of the City Council who is chosen among the Councillors and by Councillors. Furthermore the election of Councillors is not necessarily direct in Poland (see chapter 3).

<sup>14</sup> *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Miasta Poznania* [Public Bulletin of the City of Poznań], 'Struktura Organizacyjna Miasta Poznania' [Organisational structure of the City Hall of Poznań] [http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/documents.html?co=print&id=577&parent=293&instance=1001&lang=pl&lhs=bip\\_urzadz&rhs=null](http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/documents.html?co=print&id=577&parent=293&instance=1001&lang=pl&lhs=bip_urzadz&rhs=null), accessed 02.02.2008.

## Estates

One of the reasons for choosing Poznań as the object of my research was that Poznań is one of the few Polish cities to have brought accessory sub-local government bodies - the Councils of Estates - into operation (Maczak 2006:150). In Poznań Estates have a dual function, i.e. they are both sub-local level units of local self-government and community-based organisations of civil society. They are called 'accessory units' of local government. Their legislative and executive power and resources are limited and how effective they are in participating in local democracy will be a major issue investigated in this thesis.

Poznań municipality is divided into 68 Estates covering most of the city geographically as well as demographically. (The map of Poznań Estates and their names are given in Figures 1.6 and 1.7 below) The first was to be established (1991) very soon after the introduction of local government reform: its establishment, (Smochowice Estate), was due to a local initiative pressing the City Council to create the Estate. In the rest of the decade progress in the creating of Estates in the city was steady so that of the 68 some 58 had been established by 2000 (Table 1.5).

Table 1.5 Emergence of Estates between 1991 and 2005

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 and 2003	2004	2005
No of estates created in a given year	1	11	11	7	5	5	4	2	6	9	7	0	2	1
No of estates in total	1	12	23	30	35	40	44	46	52	58	65	65	67	68

Source: \_\_\_\_, 'Jednostki pomocnicze Miasta Poznania – Osiedla' [Accessory Units of the City of Poznań – Estates], City Hall of Poznań, Department Supporting the City Accessory Units.

The territorial configuration of Estates reflects the variable and changing geography of the city – the Estates are neither uniform in their size and composition, nor have their boundaries necessarily remained stable. Thus, some of new accessory units have emerged from a division of existing Estates. This can suggest that the inhabitants of those newly emerging Estates have had a need for stronger social cohesion or had an issue that allowed them to unite. Equally, according to data from City Hall the largest Estates geographically, Szczepankowo-Spławie-Krzesniki and Głuszyna, are each about 15 km<sup>2</sup> compared to the smallest, Zagroda, at only 0.1 km<sup>2</sup>. In demographic terms the most populous Estates are

Św. Łazarz with over 32,000 people and Jeżyce (over 26,000), the least populous are Zagroda (489 people) and Powstańców Śląskich (540 people). At present there are 850 Estate Councillors chosen in Estate elections.

The Estates I decided to research are both located in the former Grunwald district though they fall within very different development zones: the Św. Łazarz Estate in zone II and the Ławica Estate in zone III. Św. Łazarz is the largest estate in population terms in Poznań. The reasons for choosing the two Estates are explained in chapter 4.

The operations of the Estates are defined in Article 37 of the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act of 1990. The Estate Council, comprised of elected members of the Estate community, or the Estate General Assembly appoints the executive body, i.e. the Estate Council or Estate Board respectively. The number of members of an Estate Council is determined on the basis of Article 17 of the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act of 1990 and depends on the Estate population number. Estates with population up to 20,000 elect 15 Estate Councillors and those with a bigger population elect 21 councillors. In five of the smallest Estates - Wilczy Młyn, Zagroda, Marysieńki, Edwardowo and Radojewo, the statute allows the resident population at large to function as the General Assembly<sup>15</sup>.

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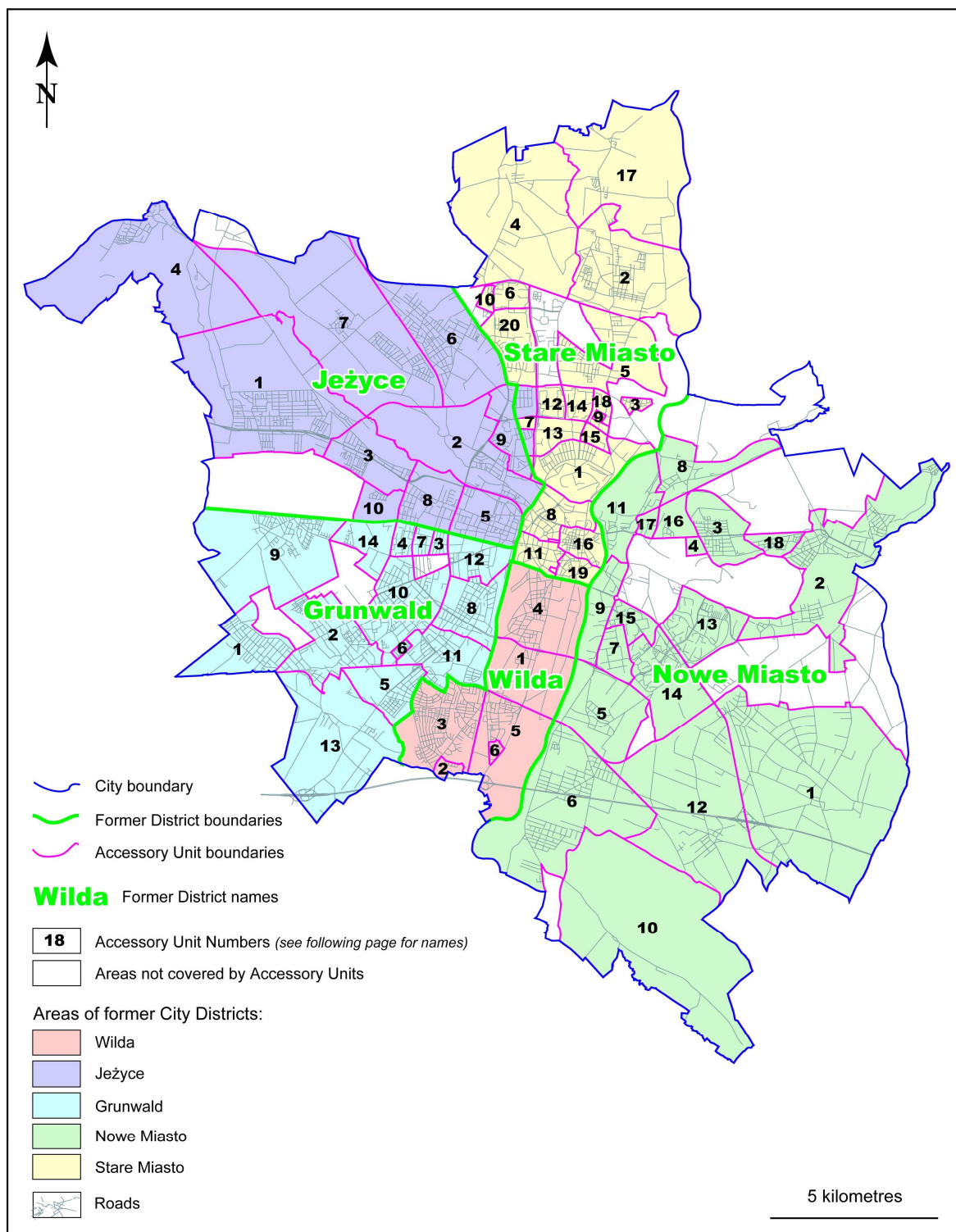
<sup>15</sup> The General Assembly option has been designated in both the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act of 1990 and the Statutes of the City of Poznań. The Assembly is valid if attended by at least 10% of the adult (over 18 years of age) residents of a given Estate.

#### **1.4. Endnote**

Democracy and what constitutes democratic practice are both highly contested terms. In spite of the different ways in which it is defined and theorised there is consensus on the argument that its practice is an essential part of understanding what we mean by democracy. As one of the countries undergoing what is labelled as the democratic transition or transformation, unravelling the nature of such practices within the working of local government and democracy in a Polish city provides the opportunity to understand how the emergence of democratic practice is contributing to the so-called democratic consolidation.

It needs to be made clear what are the limitations of this study and why. In particular, as a ‘situated case study’ this research does not aim at deriving generalisations about the advancement of democratic consolidation applicable to other former communist states. The local conditions studied do refer to the national context (Poland) and a particular social setting (Poznań). Therefore the study includes a rich description of the relevance of the country and region’s specific contexts laying the ground for further analyses and deliberation. It seeks to build understanding of the relations between local authorities and civil society that are crucial to the assessment of the quality of democracy. The intention is to provide an insight into actual democratic practices and the processes by which they become embedded as well as to point to areas and issues neglected in earlier research.

Figure 1.6 Accessory Units (Estates) in the city of Poznań in 2007



Source: Accessory Units /Estates/ of the City of Poznań, scale 1:100 000, City Hall of Poznań, Department Supporting the City Accessory Units; Digital Cartography by: Olga Mausch-Dębowska.

Figure 1.7 Names of the 68 Accessory Units in the City of Poznań in 2007. See map above (Figure 1.6) for location.

<p><b>Wilda</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 28 Czerwca 1956 r. Estate</li> <li>2. Powstań Śląskich Estate</li> <li>3. Świerczewo Estate</li> <li>4. Wilda Estate</li> <li>5. Dębiec Estate</li> <li>6. Dębina Estate</li> </ol>	<p><b>Nowe Miasto</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Szczepankowo - Splawie - Krzesinki Estate</li> <li>2. Antoninek - Zieliniec - Kobylepole Estate</li> <li>3. Warszawskie Estate</li> <li>4. Maltańskie Estate</li> <li>5. Starołęka Mała Estate</li> <li>6. Starołęka - Minikowo - Marlewo Estate</li> <li>7. Rataje Południowe Estate</li> <li>8. Główna Estate</li> <li>9. Rataje nad Wartą Estate</li> <li>10. Gluszyzna Estate</li> <li>11. Ostrów Tumski - Śródka - Zawady Estate</li> <li>12. Krzesiny - Pokrzywno - Garaszewo Estate</li> <li>13. Chartowo Estate</li> <li>14. Żegrze Estate</li> <li>15. Zielone Rataje Estate</li> <li>16. Komandoria - Pomet Estate</li> <li>17. Komandoria - Podwale Estate</li> <li>18. Antoninek Dolny Estate</li> </ol>
<p><b>Jeżyce</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Krzyżowniki - Smochowice Estate</li> <li>2. Sołacz Estate</li> <li>3. Wola Estate</li> <li>4. Kiekrz Estate</li> <li>5. Jeżyce Estate</li> <li>6. Podolany Estate</li> <li>7. Strzeszyn Estate</li> <li>8. Ogrody Estate</li> <li>9. Winiary Estate</li> <li>10. Lotników Wielkopolskich Estate</li> </ol>	<p><b>Stare Miasto</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stare Winogrody Estate</li> <li>2. Umultowo Estate</li> <li>3. Wilczy Młyn Estate</li> <li>4. Morasko Estate</li> <li>5. Naramowice Estate Estate</li> <li>6. Jana III Sobieskiego Estate</li> <li>7. Powstańców Warszawy Estate</li> <li>8. Śródmieście Estate</li> <li>9. Zagroda Estate</li> <li>10. Marysieńki Estate</li> <li>11. Św. Marcin Estate</li> <li>12. Zwycięstwa Estate</li> <li>13. Przyjaźń Estate</li> <li>14. Wichrowe Wzgórze Estate</li> <li>15. Pod Lipami Estate</li> <li>16. Starówka Estate</li> <li>17. Radojewo Estate</li> <li>18. Kosmonautów Estate</li> <li>19. Rybaki - Piaski Estate</li> <li>20. Piątkowo Zachód Estate</li> </ol>
<p><b>Grunwald</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kwiatowe Estate</li> <li>2. Junikowo Estate</li> <li>3. Stanisława Przybyszewskiego Estate</li> <li>4. Ks. Jerzego Popiełuszki Estate</li> <li>5. Górczynek Estate</li> <li>6. Ks. Ignacego Skorupki Estate</li> <li>7. Świt Estate</li> <li>8. Św. Łazarz Estate</li> <li>9. Ławica Estate</li> <li>10. Kopernika - Raszyn Estate</li> <li>11. Górczyn Estate</li> <li>12. Targowe Estate</li> <li>13. Fabianowo - Kotowo Estate</li> <li>14. Edwardowo Estate</li> </ol>	

## 2. Democratic Consolidation and Civil Society

The divide into Western and Eastern Europe was politically challenged with the fall of the Iron Curtain. In 1989 the countries of the Soviet bloc set off on their paths from authoritarian states towards democratic ones<sup>16</sup>. Dahrendorf (1990:27) observed that the revolution of 1989<sup>17</sup> was atypical as it did not introduce new ideas. Its objective and postulates were to restore pre-communist traditions. Dahrendorf's observation about the restoration of democratic traditions is most relevant as it points to traditions of local democracy and self-governance. The transition of Central and East European countries to democracy had a huge impact on the perception of the CEE region in the West in the 1990s. CEE countries<sup>18</sup> gained new identities and were distinguished from the countries of the former USSR and from the Balkan countries. The ensuing process of consolidating these nascent democracies proved to be a multifaceted affair<sup>19</sup>. It included the emergence of new political parties, a 'democratic' political culture, new democratic administrative structures (procedural democracy), the enforcement of a new legal culture, an active civil society protected by the rule of law as well as the establishment of a market economy. The main objective of this chapter is to review the theoretical literature on democratic consolidation and to understand the role of civil society in the process in order to prepare the ground for chapter 3 which is a detailed examination of the literature on the role of local government and its place within the process of democratic consolidation.

The first section (2.1) focuses on the concept of democratic consolidation. This creates the starting point for discussing the role civil society plays in a democracy (2.2). An attempt at formulating a working definition of civil society (2.2.1) is undertaken upon reviewing "the features of civil society that are most likely to serve the development and consolidation of democracy" (Diamond 1994:5). Next the frequently assumed 'weakness' of civil society in postcommunist states and the issue of its assessment is debated (2.2.2). The issue of NGOs in national and local laws and registries is brought into attention. This is followed by a

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<sup>16</sup> Communist Poland especially after 1956 resembled more an authoritarian state than a truly totalitarian one (Linz and Stepan 1996:244, 255, 261, Mason 1993:37). The system was called 'actually existing socialism' or 'real socialism' since it had diverged so much from Marxist-Leninist ideas.

<sup>17</sup> For more information on the 1989 revolutions in CEE see e.g. Ash 1990 and Bryant and Mokrzycki 1994.

<sup>18</sup> The definition of Central and Eastern Europe is comprehensively discussed in for example Batt 2003:3-22 and Batt 2007:1-19.

<sup>19</sup> In 1995 Przeworski wrote: "if democracy is to be sustained, the state must guarantee territorial integrity and physical security; it must maintain the conditions necessary for an effective exercise of citizenship, it must mobilise public savings, co-ordinate resource allocation, and correct income distribution" (Przeworski 1995:12). See also Nelson and Bentley 1994 and Crawford 1997.

review of the literature on relations between civil society and political society in CEE during the regime change (2.3) which focuses on the concept of ‘ethical’ society and the instability of the political arena (2.3.1.) and the issue of the building of local democracy (2.3.2). At this point the Polish approach to the reconstruction of local government and democracy is introduced. The situation of civil society in ‘established democracies’ differed much from the situation of Polish civil society in the 1990s and this observation is relevant to my subsequent attempt at evaluating the actual condition of civil society and local democracy in Poznań in chapters 5 and 6.

## 2.1. Democratic Consolidation

The process of democratisation has been frequently referred to as a *transition* from a non-democratic to democratic form of governance (e.g. Smith 1999:9). However democratisation is composed of phases which include democratic transition and democratic consolidation (e.g. Linz and Stepan 1996, Pridham 2001).

The fall of communist regimes in 1989-1990 was claimed to be the culmination of the third wave of democratisation<sup>20</sup> (Huntington 1991, Rupnik 2000). The Wave Theory has been criticised for a number of reasons. It does not address the *processes* of democratic consolidation<sup>21</sup> and denies the importance of civil society participation in democratic political systems limiting it to parliamentary elections<sup>22</sup>. Even though Huntington was of the opinion that “democracies are created not by causes but by causers” (Huntington

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<sup>20</sup> Huntington distinguished three waves of democracy beginning with the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century expansion of liberal democracy countered with spread of communism and fascism. According to Huntington, after the Second World War, the second and much shorter wave occurred first in post-fascist states: Germany, Japan and Austria, and later in some Latin American and African countries. The third wave started in 1974 with democratic changes in Portugal and later in Greece and Spain (see as well Diamond 1996, 1999). The next step of the third wave included democratic processes in Latin America in the 1980s. Developments in ECC countries (1989-1990) and some democratic movements in African and Asiatic countries were concurrent. Criticism of the three waves gave birth to the concept of the Fourth Wave of democratisation (Przeworski 1992; McFaul 2002) as it has been observed that the transition in post-communist countries has been different from the third wave because the impact came from below and masses were important along the elites.

<sup>21</sup> Grugel (2002), for example, writes that Huntington “underestimates the importance of factors within national states, such as class structure, civil society and the state. Consequently, the waves approach runs the risk of oversimplifying complex historical processes.” (Grugel 2002: 35-36).

<sup>22</sup> Grugel argues that Huntington understands democratisation narrowly and “[...] comes close, in fact, to seeing democracy simply as relatively clean elections independent of the size of electorate, the nature of the party system or the state of civil liberties.” (Grugel 2002:35).



1991:107), in this theory the elites decide to have a consolidated democracy and masses do not have to be involved in democratisation<sup>23</sup>.

Rustow (1970)<sup>24</sup> pointed out that factors identified as causes of democratisation (genesis<sup>25</sup>) may be different from factors relevant to sustaining democracy (functions). Transition Theory views democratisation as a process which has three main stages/phases (Rustow 1970:352-357) of which the third one is in focus here. The prerequisite (the first preparatory phase) is 'national unity' meaning "that the vast majority of citizens in a democracy-to-be must have no doubt or mental reservations as to which political community they belong to" (1970:350)<sup>26</sup>. The second phase is the decision phase or the *first transition* from authoritarian rule (political liberalisation), which can well be called "an act of deliberate, consensus" (1970:357), at which time essential are choices made by "a small circle of leaders" (1970:356)<sup>27</sup>. For Mason (1993:47), Poland was "the first in East-Central Europe to launch both democratic and economic liberalisation" and *de facto* was also the first to experience this political test. Comparing Poland to other Eastern European countries, Holmes (1997:68-72) describes the Polish transition to post-communism as a relatively peaceful, civilised affair. In the third phase the new democratic system is adopted by both the people and the politicians. This habituation phase is also called the second transition and identified with democratic consolidation on which my field research (chapters 5 and 6) focused.

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<sup>23</sup> According to Huntington (1991:45-46) common reasons for the third wave were e.g. the global growth of communication networks (demonstration effects, snowballing), liberalisation of the Catholic Church, the economic boom in the 1960s which made expectation about education and living standards higher, the deepening legitimacy problems of authoritarian systems, as well as the changing policies of global organisations such as the European Union.

<sup>24</sup> Rustow based his theory on his analysis of democratisation of Sweden (1890-1928) and Turkey (since 1945, uncompleted).

<sup>25</sup> According to Rustow (1970:346) causation (a genetic theory) is not the same as correlation. Casual social and economic links may not 'become' political factors like beliefs and attitudes may not lead to actions. The genesis of democracy need not be geographically and/or temporarily uniform as in successive phases different factors can be crucial. Furthermore even at the same time and place the attitudes that promote democracy may not be socially uniform, i.e. politicians and common citizens can hold different attitudes. See also Crawford 1997:86-97.

<sup>26</sup> The essence of the first preparatory phase is to "single out national unity as the sole background conditions [which] implies that no minimal level of economic development or social differentiation is necessary as a prerequisite to democracy" and democratisation is "set off by a prolonged and inconclusive political struggle" (Rustow 1970:352).

<sup>27</sup> Rustow argues that it is not of paramount importance "what values the leaders hold dear in the abstract, but what concrete steps they are willing to take" and usually "the agreement worked out by the leaders is far from universal. It must be transmitted to the professional politicians and to the citizenry at large" (1970:357).

In CEE the 1990s were characterised by rapid, simultaneous changes in the economic, political, social, psychological and national spheres (e.g. White 1993:9, Holmes 1997:63, Regulski 2003). In the light of this complexity some researchers opted for calling it a multiple *transformation* noticing that:

In truth, multiple transformation – which broadly distinguishes regime change in Central and Eastern Europe from earlier ‘waves’ of democratisation in Europe since 1945 – argues strongly for embracing maximalist conception of democratic consolidation. (Pridham 2001:2)

‘Transformation’ however implies a complete change of a system as a result of a far-reaching process of change.

This is likely to characterise democratisation the more it develops, i.e. transformation is more likely to arise from regime consolidation; although it is implicit in transition, for if you change a political system there will probably be some rather significant consequences. It is also likely to be a process that is distinctly more long than short term. (Pridham 2001:5)

These observations are relevant to an evaluation of democratic consolidation. As this research is concerned with the multifaceted nature of democratic consolidation, the objective of this section is to identify the various conditions a democracy must meet to be considered consolidated.

Initially the complexity of the democratisation of Central and East European countries tended to be overlooked with most research focussing upon rather narrow political and economic dimensions<sup>28</sup> ignoring other facets of this process such as the role of civil society and the international dimension<sup>29</sup> of the transformation process (for example Potter, Goldblatt, Kiloh and Lewis 1997:1). That is why the democratisation of CEE was referred to as a ‘dual’<sup>30</sup> transformation overlooking many concurrent developments relevant to the processes of democratic consolidation. Transition theory has been criticised for being overly elitist, excessively empirical and voluntaristic. It clearly diminishes the role of the new civil society, associational life and citizenship in the construction of democracy and its

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<sup>28</sup> The Shock Therapy including privatisation and fiscal policies introduced by Leszek Balcerowicz (Fowkes 1995:XVII-XXII).

<sup>29</sup> The accession of CEE countries to the EU and the impact of its structural funds and legislation.

<sup>30</sup> See for example Bermeo 1994, Encarnación 1996, Jackson, Klich and Poznańska 2005, Kochanowicz, Kozarzewski and Woodward 2005, Davidson-Schmich 2006.

consolidation<sup>31</sup>. Much criticism has centred on elitism and the habituation phase. In the 'first transition' phase, elite-led democratisation abounds with agreements, interactions, pacts and bargain struck between authoritarian leaders and democratic opposition resulting in creation of institutional basis<sup>32</sup> for democratic procedures and democratic rule, e.g. Polish Round Table in 1989. In CEE countries leaders of the democratic opposition were not politicians. Their first decisions led to much disappointment among the citizens, e.g. privatisation which led to high unemployment rates, reflected in subsequent election results which frequently 'gave the power' back to members of post-communist political parties for some time. It follows that initial phases of elite-led democratisation do not guarantee post-transition stability, some forms of political omission may be institutionalised and pacts may hinder democratisation in a long run. Elitism of the 'first transition' limits the role of the people to bystanders whose role appears to change only in the 'second transition' phase. Thus their role in democratic consolidation appears to be crucial.

In the early 1990s the paths of democratisation and the possible outcomes of the changes in CEE were disputed including the Polish pacted transition<sup>33</sup> which according to Linz and Stepan (1996:267) delayed the creation of "institutions necessary for democratic consolidation". Linz and Stepan (1996) notice that the pacted transition means that democracy started in Poland with the existence of the old regime's constitution, state apparatus and with the communist regime still having a strong position in terms of legitimisation. Their observation is both relevant and correct except for the legitimisation of the old regime as the 1989 parliamentary election results demonstrated<sup>34</sup>. Another

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<sup>31</sup> Only later the difficulties that "weak civil societies" pose in new democracies have been recognised (Przeworski 1995).

<sup>32</sup> It was noticed that the transition approach tends to conceptualise democracy as the establishment of a set of governing institutions. The two-phase transition perspective needs to be long term whereas the theory concentrates on short-term changes. It highlights micro-processes of regime collapse but leaves out the role of cultural differences, economic situations, history or the internationalisation of politics in democratisation of regions which are culturally, politically and economically different such as CEE, Ex-Soviet Union and Africa and China. Transitology "hypothesizes successful outcomes for democracy if elites can learn the 'right' way to proceed." (Grugel 2002:57). The major criticism can be summarised as follows: "When democratizations go wrong it is, by implication, because individuals 'get it wrong'. Transitology does not explain adequately why outcomes are different, except by presuming inadequate leadership styles or the adoption of incorrect policies." (Gruger 2002:61).

<sup>33</sup> This is a reference to the 1989 'round-table' talks between the opposition and the communist party (Fowkes 1995, Crawford 1997, Holmes 1997).

<sup>34</sup> Linz and Stepan (1996) refer to the compromise of 1989 when the Communist government agreed that 35 percent of the seats in what was then Poland's only chamber, the Sejm [Parliament], would be open to free, competitive elections. At the same time it was agreed to re-establish the interwar upper chamber, the Senate. All of the seats in the Senate were to be freely contested. Solidarity candidates won an overwhelming victory in the semi-free elections of June 1989, winning all of the seats it had been allowed to contest in the Sejm

important fact is that the new Polish Parliament immediately took the initiative to rebuild local government which was a milestone reform democratising the old system (*cf.* Polish local government reforms extensively discussed in chapter 3, section 3.3). In the region the actual dismantling of the institutions of the communist system took place from mid-1989 onwards. According to Dahl (1989:233), modern democracy ('polyarchy') should provide an institutional minimum which includes representatives being elected in free, fair and relatively frequent elections, freedom of speech, freedom of joining autonomous associations, freedom of accessing alternative sources of information and inclusive citizenship, i.e. society that participates in governing. It appears that the year 1989 was at best the beginning of democratic reforms, i.e. it marked the beginning of democratic transition which involved dismantling the communist system and revolutionary legislative changes that eliminated the economy of 'real socialism' (*cf.* Kulesza 2002:7, Bryant and Mokrzycki 1994:3).

The concern of Transitology has been the advancement of democratisation processes, i.e. democratic consolidation of new democracies. Democratisation entails the introduction and enrooting of democratic laws and order<sup>35</sup>. Linz and Stepan (1996:6) observe that democratisation needs the concept of a modern democratic state built upon the relationships between state, nation and democracy to discuss whether democracy has been consolidated. They claim that a democratic regime is a consolidated democracy if consolidated "behaviourally" - no group is seriously engaged in secession or regime change, "attitudinally" - most people accept that democracy is the best form of government and do not want another form of government, and "constitutionally" - democracy is consolidated when all the major organs of the state act according to the standards of democratic institutions. This means that there have to be relationships between all actors, in and between the arenas of civil society, political society, the rule of law, state apparatus and economic society (1996:16). As Linz and Stepan argue, a transition to a democratic regime is complete:

when sufficient agreement had been reached about political procedures to produce an elected government, when a government comes to power that is the direct result of a

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and 99 out of 100 seats in the Senate. (The one Senate seat which Solidarity failed to win went to an independent.)

<sup>35</sup> These, according to Grugel (2002:66), include "*institutional change* (the form of the state), *representative change* (who has influence or control over the state policies) and *functional transformation* (what the state does or the range of state responsibilities)".

free and popular vote, when this government de facto has the authority to generate new policies, and when the executive, legislative and judicial power generated the new democracy does not have to share power with other bodies de jure. (Linz and Stepan 1996:3)

According to Linz and Stepan (1996) five institutions need to be established for new democracies to be consolidated: freedoms needed for civil society to develop (not just group memberships), an 'autonomous and valued political society' (parties, elections, legislatures, etc.), rule of law, usable bureaucracy (i.e. state capacity), and 'institutionalised economic society' (Linz and Stepan 1996:16). It should be noticed that the pace at which they are introduced and take shape can be indicative of the progress of democratisation, i.e. the timing and dynamism of the transition and consolidation. However a completed transition does not mean that the process of democratic consolidation is complete as its completion depends on how democracy is practised by both, citizens and national and local authorities. It was observed that in a competitive and inclusive system of governance there must be space for exercising various rights and liberties. Diamond, Linz and Lipset (1995) wrote that democracy encompasses not only a civilian, constitutional, multiparty regime, with regular, free, and fair elections and universal suffrage, but organisational and informational pluralism; extensive civil liberties (freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organisations); effective power for elected officials; and functional autonomy for legislative, executive, and judicial organs of government. In 1997 Crawford argued that democracy "is true of decisions made within the home, at the workplace, in the school or university, in the town council, at the national or federal levels of government" (Crawford 1997:81).

In Poland the multifaceted processes of democratisation have taken place at all levels and local developments should not be overlooked. They affected citizens who needed to learn to function in a free market economy and societies which needed to learn to safeguard their democratic rights and act as "a network of social groups, modes of thinking and cultural traditions which operate autonomously from the state and its political institutions" (Smith 1999:10). New civil societies appear to be essential to ensuring effective and accountable administration (*cf.* Yoder 2003). By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century CEE countries were already perceived as "the most likely success cases in moving without serious diversion through democratic consolidation" (Pridham 2001:2). I would argue that the condition of local democracy gives essential insight into the process of enrooting democratic practices.

The main question that emerges is about the actual practice of democracy and actors involved (sections 2.2 and 2.3.2).

## 2.2. Civil Society

Democratisation entails the introduction and enrooting of democratic laws and order<sup>36</sup>. Democratic consolidation can be understood both as a result and as a process (Goll 2006). In the previous section where the concept of democratic consolidation was in focus the issue of behavioural, attitudinal and constitutional aspects of consolidation (Linz and Stepan 1996) was brought into attention. It follows that in debates on democratic consolidation due attention should be given to the quality of new democracies. Already in 1994, Diamond observed that:

[...] to comprehend democratic change around the world, one must study civil society. [...] Understanding civil society's role in the construction of democracy requires more complex conceptualization and nuanced theory. The simplistic antinomy between state and civil society, locked in a zero-sum struggle, will not do. (Diamond 1994:5)

Democratic features of civil society and its role in democratisation/democratic processes were widely debated in the context of CEE democratic transformation. Currently researchers are seeking to assess the extent to which the CEE states have consolidated their democracies (e.g. Cox 2007, Howard 2002, 2003, Kubik 2005). Goll (2006:2) states that *established* civil society is a feature of a consolidated democracy but adds that “[...] a civil society is not necessarily only the outcome of the transformation to democracy, but it is in different ways a stimulus of the transformation itself.”<sup>37</sup> Analyses of the actual practice of democracy in CEE countries have led to a recognition of the relevant actors involved in democratisation and an evaluation of their civic skills (e.g. Przeworski 1993, Linz and Stepan 1996). Assessing the role of civil society in the consolidation of democracy and measuring the quality and value of civil society is a complex issue. It is difficult primarily because the term ‘civil society’ is a conceptually contested concept. Secondly, the emergence of new civil societies should be seen in the changing political and socio-

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<sup>36</sup> These, according to Grugel (2002:66), include “*institutional change* (the form of the state), *representative change* (who has influence or control over the state policies) and *functional transformation* (what the state does or the range of state responsibilities)”.

<sup>37</sup> Prior to 1989 Poland had a very active civil society which succeeded in guiding mass opposition to Solidarity's victory. Grugel (2002:64-67) claims that during the process of democratisation a “shift in the power balance within civil society” takes place. In CEE countries, their civil societies were - in various ways - the driving force of the transformation itself.

economic contexts in CEE. The question is whether their civil societies are established and what civic culture entails. That is why it is essential to investigate “the features of civil society that are most likely to serve the development and consolidation of democracy” (Diamond 1994:5).

In this section different views on civil society, its place and features are presented to provide its working definition (2.2.1). This is followed with deliberations on the assumed weakness of civil society in post-communist countries (2.2.2) and the data on Polish NGOs. The literature and data referred to in section 2.2 point to the relevance of a review of relations between civil society and political society undertaken in section 2.3.

### 2.2.1. Defining Civil Society

The term *civil society* has not been clearly defined and thus it raises theoretical disputes. The aim of this section is to decide on a working definition of *civil society* or rather to underline some key functions of civil society that in CEE, Poland<sup>38</sup> in particular, have had an important part in the process of democratic consolidation at the local level. First, two leading approaches towards civil society are presented and commented upon with the focus on relationships between the state and civil society where the state is understood to be the governmental ‘authorities’ and includes local government. To identify the essential features of civil society, I concentrate on its democratic functions and its relationship with political society. Finally the essential features of civil society are summarised in my working definition of the term. In this section ‘organisations’ of civil society mean NGOs<sup>39</sup> which are the “core of civil society” (Ziółkowski 2005:42) but whose identification is not obvious (see chapter 6).

Civil society is a broad concept which may cover many social activities of individuals, groups and movements. In the subject literature the space where civil society is positioned is at the point of contact between the public and private spheres. Foley and Edwards (1996), Myant (2005) and Fisher (1997) all point out the problem of lack of sharpness of the definition of civil society. Indeed, while comparing different approaches, it is difficult

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<sup>38</sup> The qualities and features of a democratic system and civil society are in part historically and culturally conditioned and the same refers to qualities and features of a consolidating democracy because the choices people make are conditioned by structured environments. Structured environments are relevant to the path of democratic transition from its onset to democratic consolidation as they are the reality and patterns of interactions inherited and changed by the involved. Goll argues that “Simply to focus on the end of the transformation ignores the diversity of regime changes in this area.” (Goll 2006:2).

<sup>39</sup> Public benefit organisations and other voluntary associations.

to agree what civil society is and what it is not and to match its criteria based definitions with a coherent place for civil society in political or social life. However, the term in question has always been connected with the rethinking of the relationship between power and citizenship (Myant 2005:250). Civil society, when it is not used as a synonym for society in general, is used to refer to “that segment of society that interacts with the state, influences the state and yet is distinct from the state” (Chazan 1992:281 quoted in Fisher 1997:447). In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century two<sup>40</sup> broad lines of thought about civil society crystallised. In these two approaches relationships between the state and civil society are different.

The first approach towards civil society emphasises the place of *organised citizens as a support to democratic institutions*. It is linked to the work of Alexis de Tocqueville and his account of a conscious and involved citizenry able to organise itself independently of organs of power and acting as a constraint on potentially despotic governments<sup>41</sup> (Myant 2005:250, *cf.* Audier 2006). Tocqueville, in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, wrote about *local and associative participation in Democracy in America*. He claimed that:

In democratic countries the science of association is the mother of science; the progress of all the rest depends upon the progress it has made. (Tocqueville [1840] 1946:110)

Local and associative participation<sup>42</sup> were for Tocqueville the remedies to the danger of increasing individualism. He defined individualism as opposed to selfishness as:

[...] a mature and calm feeling, which disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellows and to draw apart with his family and his friends, so that after he has thus formed a little circle of his own, he willingly leaves society at large to itself. (*ibid.* p.98)

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<sup>40</sup> In a discussion of civil society in CEE one should mention the third and least popular approach towards civil society that highlights individualism. The third approach is not mainstream but it has been voiced in debates on the role of civil society in CEE democratisation processes, in the context of the Czech democratisation in particular. Its emphasis on individualism contrasts with the Tocquevillean approach. In short, the third approach highlights private, individual activity, free from state control, along the lines of Adam Smith’s ‘invisible hand’ of market relations (*cf.* Myant 2005:252). This approach can be linked to Margaret Thatcher’s view that there is no society, only individuals and their families. Havel and Klaus - leading Czech politicians – debated the two approaches. In 2005 Myant observed that “[...] when it came to practical issues, many on the Czech political scene used a narrower interpretation [of civil society], often amounting to NGOs and activists’ groups” (Myant 2005:251).

<sup>41</sup> On the issue of democratic despotism see: Tocqueville [1840] 1946:316-321.

<sup>42</sup> On the issue of public associations in civil life see: Tocqueville [1840] 1946:106-110.



Tocqueville contrasted individual interests and acts with associative group forming pointing to “the close tie that unites private and general interest”:

It is difficult to draw a man out of his own circle to interest him in the destiny of the state, because he does not clearly understand what influence the destiny of the state can have upon his own lot. But if it is proposed to make a road cross the end of his estate, he will see at a glance that there is a connection between this small public affair and his greatest private affairs [...] (*ibid.* p.104)

He argued that participation had an educational effect on people allowing them to learn by doing and to develop political skills and democratic attitudes that turn them into good citizens. Thus his conscious and involved citizenry is an informed teaching environment. It is local and based on groups.

At the same time he stressed the importance of the relations between political and civil associations<sup>43</sup> explaining that in democratic nations citizens are “individually powerless” and they often do not “anticipate the strength that they may acquire by uniting together; it must be shown to them in order to be understood.” (*ibid.* p.116).

Political associations may [...] be considered as large free schools, where all the members of the community go to learn the general theory of association. But even if political association did not directly contribute to the progress of civil association, to destroy the former would be to impair the latter. (*ibid.* pp.116-117)

‘Neo-Tocquevilleans’ also stress the importance of associations. In Putnam’s opinion:

Civil associations contribute to the effectiveness and stability of democratic government [...] both because of their “internal” effects on individual members and because of their “external” effects on the wider polity. (Putnam 1993:89)

Participation in civic organisations is crucial because it implants and develops skills of cooperation, solidarity and public-spiritedness, as well as a sense of shared responsibility for collective action. Putnam (1993:90) gives examples of a choral society and a bird-watching club, saying that though those associations do not have a political agenda participation in them, they can still “teach self-discipline and an appreciation for the joy of successful collaboration” (*ibid.*). They build social trust and social capital. It is the high density network of associations that contributes to effective democratic governance as it “both embodies and contributes to effective social collaboration” (*ibid.*).

Thus ‘Neo-Tocquevilleans’ assigned:

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<sup>43</sup> On the issue of relations between political and civil associations see: Tocqueville [1840] 1946:115-120.

[...] autonomous, non-hierarchical and frequently non-political organizations a role in enabling citizens to create social capital by an educating and socializing process, spanning a historically long period of time, in which citizens learn to trust, responsibility and other virtuous qualities that can provide a foundation for democratic politics. (Myant 2005:250)

Putnam (1995:74-75) underlines the importance of the civic engagement and social connectedness asking for the reasons for its erosion in United States and suggests that there is a “need to explore creatively how public policy impinges on (or might impinge on) social-capital formation” (*ibid.*, pp.74-76). In his later work Putnam (2000) argues for the changes that may help forming or strengthening social capital by creating an environment ‘friendly’ to civic education and associative life. He also called for *investment by all citizens in political life* that would result in more people participating in the public life of their “communities-running for office, attending public meetings, serving on committee, campaigning in elections, and even voting.” (Putnam 2000:413).

In the ‘neo-Tocquevillean’ approach civil society’s organisations increase the political efficacy and democratic skills of citizens, because the organisations:

[...] have the capacity to efficiently transfer training and skills that assist individuals and communities to compete in markets, to provide welfare services to those who are marginalized by the market, and to contribute democratization and the growth of a robust civil society, all of which are considered as critical to the success of the neoliberal economic policies. (Fisher 1997:444)

The ‘neo-Tocquevillean’ approach to civil society has been criticised for its problematically assumed *autonomy of civil society from the state* (e.g. Howard 2002, 2003) and the *simplistic and non-conflictual notion of civil society* (Myant 2005:251). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the fact that:

In reality, modern societies are ‘criss-crossed by group conflicts’ making problematic a simple juxtaposition between the state and civil society. Some autonomous organizations may actively oppose the state, while others help or support it. Some may come into conflict with one another, most obviously trade unions and employers’ organizations. Such conflicts are regulated and reconciled by the state, meaning again that the two spheres may be closely intertwined. (Myant 2005:251)

The second approach towards civil society concentrates on its independence from institutional power structures. Cohen and Arato (1987) reinterpret Habermas’s deliberative democratic model of society and see civil society as a sphere of *social interactions* between economy and state. In 1992 Cohen and Arato defined civil society more narrowly as anything apart from the state, economic power, market relations and clearly formal

forms of political activity. In their view, civil society is composed of the intimate sphere (family), the sphere of associations, social movements and forms of public communication. This means that civil society is a ‘from the bottom up’ organisation of society, which does not enter the ‘system’ but influences it by pressing from below and tries to change it<sup>44</sup>. Thus civil society’s autonomy should follow from the exercise of civic liberties respected by a democratic state. However civil society’s independence from the power structure, that is a situation in which civil society does not enter the system but influences it, seems to be an idealistic proposition. In reality civil society is not a true outsider to the system of governance. It suffices to consider sources of funding<sup>45</sup> of its organisations’ activities and the areas of activities (e.g. Baccaro 2005, Fisher 1997, Sloat 2005, Vesínová-Kalivodová 2005). Civil society that gets involved in local projects frequently cooperates with local authorities. This cooperation often includes project co-funding. In such a case public resources (not private) are used with the intention of achieving public aims and civil society is the reference. When civil society’s organisations apply for grants (which is common in the EU; compare Sloat 2005:441), transparency of procedures (grant competitions) is an important issue. Common criticism includes troublesome procedures (bureaucracy), attitudes of authorities and rivalry between organisations of civil society themselves. In my opinion rivalry may be a positive development as it can and should press for organisations’ self-improvement reflected in the quality of activities pursued. Rivalry can be beneficial for all parties involved provided that local authorities respect transparency norms. The cooperation of civil society organisations with local authorities leads to numerous formal and informal links between these partners (Fisher 1997:441). In such a situation, local authorities may treat civil society’s organisations as “a potential source of alternative development discourses and practices” (Fisher 1997:443). Furthermore, once relationships are established, they are conducive to enrooting:

[...] a model of ‘associational democracy’ in which state and civil society organizations are both part of a single, new regulatory framework that transforms both.[...] In this new regulatory framework the state no longer dictates regulatory outcomes from above in ‘command-and-control’ fashion. The key idea in the model is the devolution of as many regulatory functions as possible to local groups and

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<sup>44</sup> Myant (2005) underlines that such references are common in studies on CEE (see for example Howard 2002, 2003).

<sup>45</sup> If private resources are used to achieve private aims then the market economy is the reference. When public resources are used for the purpose of public goals and interests then the reference is the public or local government administration. When private resources are used with the intention of achieving public aims, civil society is the reference (*cf.* Ziółkowski 2005:33-34).

associations with detailed knowledge of the problems and possible solutions, extensive monitoring capacities and the potential to deliberate about generalizable as opposed to purely sectional interests. The state does not wither away in this new model but does new things. Besides defining the basic goals of public policy, it selects the social actors participating in policy formation (based on their potential contribution), encourages the organization of under-represented interests, establishes minimal standards of performance, favours circulation of information and best practices, and reserves the right to intervene in case selfregulation fails. With minimum standards and reporting obligations, this regulatory model is far from voluntaristic. (Baccaro 2005:2)

Interestingly, the associational democracy model actually draws on Tocqueville's local and associative participation and has a promising social potential. Civil society does not have to be self-supported and strictly autonomous from the state. It becomes a partner of local authorities in public joint ventures. In such a situation civil society does not become part of political society however it enters the system of governance by taking responsibility for the execution of a part of some public policies. This may lead to the excessive passing of public tasks to NGOs. In the above described contexts of activities of civil society's organisations one should seek answers to questions about the possibly acceptable relations between civil society and local government authorities.

Conclusions drawn at this point are that in democratic systems people may come together for the purpose of initiating an action to uphold civil liberties, freedom, and justice. Civil society should be autonomous from the state but at the same time it is functioning within its system so it should be bound by a legal order or set of shared rules as it needs the protection of an institutionalised legal order to guard its autonomy and freedom of actions. Civil society can act as a system of control but "civil society not only restricts state power but legitimates state authority when that authority is based on the rule of law." (Diamond 1994:5).<sup>46</sup> The most effective means of exercising that control is the use of democratic institutions by civil society. Civil society is distinct from 'society' at large and, according to Diamond, does not include family<sup>47</sup> or individual life as "it involves citizens *acting collectively in a public sphere*" (Diamond 1994:5). Despite the disputable differentiation between the public and the intimate, "precision in the descriptive definition reduces the ambitions associated with the term [civil society]. It becomes one part of, rather than the historical foundation and precondition for, democratic life" (Myant 2005:251). Living

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<sup>46</sup> Diamond (1994:5-6) points out that if "the state itself is lawless and contemptuous of individual and group autonomy, civil society may still exist [...] if its constituent elements operate by some set of shared rules (which, for example, eschew violence and respect pluralism)."

<sup>47</sup> In contrast to Cohen and Arato (1992).

within civil society means not only knowing and appreciating the rights of democratic citizenship and the possible impact of civil activities, but also remembering about obligations and responsibilities towards the state and the society. Civil society as an organised social life is described with such adjectives as voluntary, self-generating, self-supporting and both self-governing and pluralistic (compare Diamond 1994:5). If civil society can be viewed as a 'life', I would suggest that it is worth considering it and democracy as ongoing processes. Once a democracy is established, civil society can primarily be discussed in terms of its condition which depends on numerous factors. Consequently, one should identify the necessary conditions the society needs to meet to be considered civil.

### **A working definition of civil society**

Democracy implies pluralism<sup>48</sup> and civil society is pluralistic. It legitimises various groups<sup>49</sup>. Diamond (1994:6) offers a review of organisations involved in the formation of civil society showing that they can have economic, cultural, informational-educational, developmental (organisations that combine individual resources to improve the infrastructure, institutions, and quality of life) character. Civil society provides the much needed space for civil groups that are seeking in a nonpartisan fashion to arrive at solutions for the improvement of the political system by making it more democratic through human rights monitoring, voter education and mobilisation, poll-watching, anticorruption efforts, etc.<sup>50</sup> Civil society draws members of the society into processes of change and teaches and accustomises them to innovative approaches. In civil society organisations new leaders are trained and recruited from. Civil society organisations also include the independent mass media, universities, think tanks, publishing houses, theatres, film production companies, and artistic networks. In other words, a democratic function of civil society is to create channels other than political parties for the articulation, aggregation and representation of interests. Civil society assists citizens by spreading information (e.g. Diamond 1994:10) so

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<sup>48</sup> Pluralism allows space for different interests including those aimed at the introduction of authoritarian rule which negates democracy, so there is the need for ongoing control.

<sup>49</sup> Pluralism and diversity are features of democracy that create a normative consensus (Ziółkowski 2005:34-35) which is the first stage and precondition for the existence of a true civil society. It means that society approves of the emergence of conflicting interest or issue based groups. That brings up the tolerance aspect. Interests within the society with a vigorous idea of civil society often cross-cut making principal polarities of political conflict less intense.

<sup>50</sup> They can be interest-based or issue-oriented. The first are designed to advance or defend the common functions or material interests of their members (e.g. workers, veterans, pensioners). The latter are movements for environmental protection, women's rights, land reform or consumer protection (e.g. Brunell 2002, Fagan 2005, Sloat 2005, Vesínová-Kalivodová 2005).

that society is well-informed about government policies and able to see different possible solutions and to question or better understand different political actions. Sometimes civil society can be linked to revealing behind-the-scene actions and corruption. Civil society keeps aiding democracy through the dissemination of information because this can lead to decreasing resistance towards unexpected changes.

Civil society is different from political society, the latter meaning basically the party system, though it may cooperate with authorities. “Organizations and networks in civil society may form alliances with parties, but if they become captured by parties, or hegemonic within them, they thereby move their primary locus of activity to political society and lose much of their ability to perform certain unique mediating and democracy building functions” (Diamond 1994:7). Kubik (2005:119) shares this view writing that “Political parties are sometimes seen as parts of civil society. There are, however, good analytical reasons to ‘allocate’ them to a separate domain of the polity – the political society”. Political society “is made up of political parties and other explicitly political organizations such as lobbying groups that provide institutional channels through which various societal interests and claims are aggregated and translated into generalized policy recommendations” (Kubik 2005:119). It appears that while defining civil society one should distinguish the interests of civil society from the interests of political parties. However Ziółkowski (2005) states that civil society understood in its broadest sense is an area encompassing various interests and values of diverse features. Some of them have political character and are best aggregated by political parties that function in an intermediate sphere between the state and small social groups. Ziółkowski (2005:45) writes that indeed one can distinguish three spheres: the state, political parties, and civil society. The sphere of civil society can be observed by tracing activities that do not aim at realising political goals and by examining mechanisms that shape activities of ‘higher political’ relevance, i.e. beyond one’s everyday experience<sup>51</sup>. The sphere of political parties legitimises national politics by connecting the two other spheres: the state and civil society. In contrast to political parties the main domains of civil society are local policies and particular interests of cultural and professional groups and territorial communities. To advance his observations further, local politics may mirror the interests of particular political parties. However, it is local policies that civil society is mostly interested in and

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<sup>51</sup> In this approach political parties are treated as a separate, intermediate level, which aggregates and moves some local interests to the level of national politics.

monitors. Thus a discussion of civil society should primarily concern local activities where private resources and public goals meet. At the national level, civil society emerges as an aggregate of mainly local voluntary activities. Surely there are issues of a much wider concern than local. They lead to national/major civil society actions through the networking of local groups or individual citizens' response to appeals of leading organisation. Recent Polish examples of the latter case include the activities of the *Polska Akcja Humanitarna* organisation [Polish Humanitarian Aid Action<sup>52</sup>] and the Polish Women's Congress<sup>53</sup>. National and local civil society organisations do not seek directly to gain political power, like trade unions do not seek to own business entities, but many try to influence political decisions. In fact, associational life within a society supplements the role of political parties in stimulating political participation and, therefore, makes the democratic state stronger.

As discussed above, references to civil society are inherent to debates on democracy and democratisation, however the term *civil society* is an unclear one. In a consolidated democracy, civil society can primarily be discussed in terms of its condition which depends on numerous factors. To conclude, civil society is an ongoing process of voluntary, self-generating but organised social life that is both pluralistic and self-governing. The main features of civil society are pluralism and diversity. As relationships between political authorities and civil society's organisations keep changing, the latter need not be exclusively self-supporting. Civil society is autonomous from the state. It is definitely bound by the legal order and primarily manifests itself at a local level. It channels concerns and spreads information providing the framework and space for the articulation, aggregation and representation of concerns. At local and national levels it is concerned with the ongoing control of public authorities' excessive use of power and malpractice. I adopt the following working definition:

Civil society is voluntary, self-generating and gives rise to a self-governing organized social life with the interest-based and issue-oriented actions of society members.

The essence of the adopted working definition of civil society is that civil society is both a process and an organised form of public social life that reinforces a democratic state. Civil

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<sup>52</sup> See *Polska Akcja Humanitarna* [Polish Humanitarian Aid Action], <http://www.pah.org.pl/en-index.html>, accessed 07.09.2009.

<sup>53</sup> See Polish Women's Congress, <http://pslforum.worldbankgroup.org/docs/20090620warsaw.pdf>, accessed 07.09.2009.

society at the national level is by large though not solely an aggregate of the society's involvement in public affairs at the local level. This observation points to the importance of analysing local manifestations of civil society and its concern with local policies to assess the strength of Polish civil society. This section is directly relevant to my analytical chapter 6 where my working definition of civil society is verified.

### **2.2.2. CEE 'weak' civil society and its assessments**

Democracy is a system which is not *given*. It requires to be confirmed with on-going active participation of citizens in public life and thus the condition of civil society in CEE is relevant to debates on democratic consolidation. The prevailing view is that civil society in CEE is weak. I argue that interpretations of the condition of civil society in CEE are misguided as more emphasis should be put on the quality and not quantity of links and on connectedness between civil society and political society. In this section I critically review arguments used in the literature evaluating the condition of civil society in Central and East European countries. Attention is brought to the disputable data on NGOs in Poland. This is relevant to my case study of civil society activity in Poznań which aims to demonstrate the impact of civil society on the new Polish democracy.

Indeed in the prevailing view, civil society in CEE is judged to be weak. Cox observes that:

The predominant view within the literature on civil society and its relation with the state in post-communist CEE is that democratization has been impeded, not so much by weak institutional development of organizations linking the state and interest groups, as by the weak development of groups in civil society. (Cox 2007: 283)

Howard (2002 and 2003) has 'measured' civil society as the number of organisational memberships per person and concluded that civil society is by far the strongest in older democracies (2.39 average), weaker in post-authoritarian states (1.82), and conspicuously the weakest in post-communist states (0.91). He points out three main factors which could have negatively contributed to this situation: the mistrust in communist organisations in some of which membership was obligatory, persistence of private networks that developed under communism and were based on personal friendships and the widespread disappointment with political and economic developments since the collapse of the communist state. Howard argues that the level of participation in civil society is low throughout post-communist Europe and the lack of engagement can be viewed as indicative of the hollow, procedural and formalistic character of post-communist



democracy. He also observes that “a more optimistic interpretation would suggest that absence of a vibrant civil society poses no obstacle to democracy and democratic stability” (Howard 2002:163-164). Nowadays people’s involvement in public affairs and participation in voluntary organisations seems to decline in older democracies too.<sup>54</sup> Commenting on the above Howard notes that the involvement of altruistic enthusiasts who place civic affairs above their personal life and well-being of their families may actually be socially costly. At the same time he does “not believe that the weakness of civil society is a good sign for a healthy democracy.” (*ibid.* p.164). In his view “the weakness of civil society constitutes a distinctive element of postcommunist democracy, a pattern that points to a qualitatively different relationship between citizens and the state, and one that may well persist throughout the region for at least several decades.” (*ibid.*).

Referring to Howard (2003), Cox (2007:284) agrees that post-communist legacies produced an aversion to membership in collective organisations (culture unsympathetic towards civic actions) and that private networks prevail. Additionally he draws attention to the ‘demoralisation’ of citizens in the post-communist period. In general, transition literature argues that “institutions of civil society are rather weak in respect to their impact on social relations and their influence on political decisions” (Lemke 2001:13).

The weakness of Polish civil society can, however, be seen in a different perspective. Organisations of civil society are interest groups. Ziółkowski (2005:45) points to the triad of the state, the political party system and civil society. In an ideal situation there is a balance among the three. In this triad civil society covers the level of local and particular politics expressing the interests of particular cultural and professional groups, local communities and territorial units. Ziółkowski (2005:46-47) argues that currently in Poland, civil society is the strongest in the triad<sup>55</sup> and that a general evaluation of the actual

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<sup>54</sup> “[...] political participation and trust in government are supposedly in decline throughout much of the world, as people withdraw from public activities in increasingly large numbers. Perhaps the postcommunist present, having skipped or bypassed the “stage” of an active participatory democracy, actually resembles the democratic future in the rest of the world. Moreover, in terms of democratic stability, some argue that a strong and vibrant civil society can actually contribute to the breakdown of democracy.” (Howard 2002:163-164).

<sup>55</sup> According to Ziółkowski the Polish state and the party system are comparatively weaker as the political arena is unstable and the level of public trust in public authorities is low due to e. g. frequent changes of central government and lack of established traditional political parties. Ziółkowski argues that the issue of low trust which apparently is an obstacle to ‘cultural modernisation’ (see Sztompka 1999) is not the issue as in Poland trust in other people has decreased only slightly. He reports on research which has demonstrated that at present more people are inclined to trust one another than in 1998. The percentage of those who think so is under 50% though. Most trusting are people who have higher education.

functioning of civil society in Poland should be moderately positive. According to him, Polish civil society has clearly been present in the collective life of Poles - though not to the same extent as in older democracies - despite apathy and fairly widespread frustration accompanying Poland's transition from a communist system to democracy. Polish civil society voices protests and articulates demands but it also continues societal traditions. It undertakes actions that aim at improving living standards and shaping national and local policies. Ziółkowski argues that manifestations of Polish civil society are mostly reactions to current issues or problems. He (2005:42) also claims that people are more likely to join 'events' and argues that Polish society is more active when it comes to huge, spectacular and one-off actions like charity events/actions of Caritas Polska<sup>56</sup> before Christmas and Easter or the annual Grand Finale of the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity [*Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy*]<sup>57</sup>. In the same article, Ziółkowski (2005:33) comments on the emergence of numerous interest based activities pointing out that the mobilisation of society members to solve a particular problem may be treated as an indicator of the actual strength of civil society.

Regular involvement in public affairs may not be high due to a 'lack of trust'. Jałowiecki (2005:26) argues that most people cannot afford and frequently do not want to devote their time to civic activities. They expect the local administration and government to service citizens efficiently and to work on improving the living standards of local communities. He claims that the need for the active involvement of citizens as a condition for local development is 'an ideological myth' with has little to do with reality. Jałowiecki emphasises that citizens are active only in situations where their interests are jeopardised or if an issue that is relevant to them directly, e.g. delivery of municipal services. They are not particularly interested in what they judge to be irrelevant to them. Jałowiecki (2005:27)

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<sup>56</sup> Caritas Polska is a relief, development and social service organisation of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland.

<sup>57</sup> *Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy* [The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity Foundation] is one of the biggest, non-governmental, non-profit, charity organisations in Poland. The Grand Finale takes place on the first or second Sunday of every January. Sponsored by many Polish and world-wide companies, it is a one-day long, nationwide, money-raising event. Volunteers from all around Poland go out on the streets and collect money in special cans which are labelled with a red heart and the name of the organisation. They also have identification cards as a precaution against fraud. Every person who gives the volunteers any amount of money, gets a red heart sticker in return. On this one day, huge parties/events are thrown around the country (and abroad where Polish communities are big). These are organised by volunteers, except for the biggest event which takes place at the *Pałac Kultury i Nauki* [Palace of Culture and Science] in Warsaw, and is managed by the GOCC itself. Throughout thirteen Grand Finales, the Foundation collected USD \$ 63,480,794.16 for cardio-surgery, neonatology, paediatric oncology, kidney diseases, congenital defects, newborns and children under 5 years of age. Based on: <http://en.wosp.org.pl/final/>, accessed 18.08.2009.

claims that in Poland it is more difficult to win the support and involvement of community members for ‘positive actions’ like, for instance having gas pipes laid, than for ‘negative actions’ like protests against closing down a local school. The issue of what makes an action ‘negative’ or ‘positive’ and for whom and why is investigated further in chapter 6, in particular in section 6.5.

The popular Western assumption about an active civil society is that citizens need to be active constantly to have civil society. In other words if people are not very active in the social sphere, civil society is weak. However, involvement in civil society organisations can be shifting. Hirschman ([1982], 2002) argues that all actions are undertaken “because they are expected to yield satisfaction” but they also “yield disappointment and dissatisfaction” (2002:10). He distinguishes “*two varieties of active life*: one is the traditional *vita active* which is wholly concentrated with public affairs; and the other is the pursuit of a better life for oneself and one’s family, “better” being understood primarily in terms of increased material welfare” (Hirschman [1982], 2002:7). Hirschman’s idea about societies being predisposed to oscillate between periods of intense preoccupation with public issues and periods of almost total concentration on individual improvement and private welfare good appears to be relevant in the context of CEE democratisation.

It is easier to be active only occasionally because constant participation is time consuming. It is not uncommon that the involvement of citizens is limited to a minimum. Those whose involvement in basic civic affairs is limited to casting votes in national elections may be explained with their dissatisfaction with the results of former elections, candidates or living standards. It is not uncommon for only around 50% of potential electors to ‘bother’ to cast their votes. In Poland, low turnouts may also be attributed to the old mentality, i.e. the ‘nothing will change anyway’ attitude (Dzwończyk 2004)<sup>58</sup>. The maximum involvement would mean committing much time to meeting and lobbying. Regular active participation in social life is an effort. CBOS [Public Opinion Research Center<sup>59</sup>] Report of 2008<sup>60</sup> states that in 2007 most respondents (61%) helped the needy. In most cases the help was in the form of goods (44%) or financial assistance (43%). Only 19% (and less frequently) worked

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<sup>58</sup> On the issue of turnout in Poland see e.g. McManus-Czubińska, Miller, Markowski and Wasilewski (2004), Czeński (2007), Górecki (2006).

<sup>59</sup> The Public Opinion Research Center (CBOS) [*Centrum Badania Opinii Publicznej*] established in 1982, is a publicly funded independent research centre.

<sup>60</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2008) ‘*Polacy o swojej aktywności społecznej*’ [Poles about their voluntary/civil activities], Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS), Warszawa, February, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K\\_020\\_08.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K_020_08.PDF), accessed 11.07.2010.

or offered services for *publico bono*. As little as 4% did unpaid work for charities on a regular basis. In 2007 every fifth respondent (20%) did voluntary unpaid work for his or her local community or people in need. 20% of respondents were active in civil society organisations, however it remains unclear in the report what kinds of organisations these were. Of those involved in civil society organisations, 12% were active in one area, 4% in two areas and 4% in three or more areas. When people concentrate on gaining material goods, they do not have time to participate in social activities. In less affluent countries constant involvement (e.g. active membership in civil society organisations) in civic affairs is costly. In Poland at the time of my research over 65% of the working population's personal income before tax was not much higher than the unemployment benefit. In such an economic situation it is not surprising that few people can afford to work for *publico bono*. They rather seek other options to increase their income. People's interests in public affairs shift and "people's critical appraisals of their own experiences and choices" are "important determinants of new and different choices" (Hirschman [1982], 2002:6; see also Gremion 1999:40). People act when they see personal gains, satisfaction included and when they have time. When they achieve a sufficient level of satisfaction, they try to find new areas of activities and they become open to what social life can offer. I would adhere to Hirschman's opinion that civil society need not be strongly active at all times. Consequently the activities of Polish civil society need to be discussed in their changing environment. Activities for *publico bono* may be undertaken by various groups regardless of their membership size. Due to the reluctance to join organised life, in Poland the groups may not see a point in registering as organisations at all. The question is whether or not their activities serve the public interest.

Kubik (2005) analyses Howard's approach and presents an alternative approach to the assessment of the condition of civil society. He refers to the volume edited by Bermeo and Nord (2000) and concludes that "the westernization-modernization and the growth of civil society are seen by many observers as simply progressing hand in hand" (Kubik 2005:113). The modernising conditions include a high density of associational life, a high level of urbanisation (economic modernisation) and the extension of modernisation. However the functioning and growth of civil society does not necessarily depend on their existence. Bermeo argues that civil society in each country is very much a product of highly specific combinations of factors and identifies two conditions that are particularly important for the development of civil society: the climate of toleration and a developed system of links with the authorities especially parliament's ability to connect with civil

society. Kubik argues that the numerical weakness of civil society diagnosed by Howard does not necessarily mean its functional weakness as Bermeo's findings are encouraging suggesting that it is possible to begin constructing civil society without a sufficiently developed infrastructure, high degree of urbanisation or a "well-functioning" electoral system. "To determine the level of civil society's functional weakness/strength, we need to operationalize "quality" and "connectedness", the two most desired features of "good" civil society." (Kubik 2005:114). In Kubik's opinion the quality of civil society can be measured on four dimensions: tolerance, transparency, legality and civil society as a collection of 'secondary' groups. All those were explicitly or implicitly incorporated into my case study while designing my research, i.e. in questionnaires and interview questions.

Citizens' participation in public life is important. It stems from and strengthens democratic attitudes without which the people's voices and opinions are hardly represented in political decision-making processes. It has an educative effect on people, allowing them to learn by doing and to develop civic skills. The above is a mixture of the Neo-Toquevillean (e.g. Putnam) and Theda Skocpol's arguments (1985) (e.g. Howard 2002, 2003, Cox 2007). Influential civil society depends on the ability of interest groups and associations to connect with institutions of political society (Kubik 2005:114). Thus, even in societies where the level of participation in civil society is low, governments may be restrained and influenced, and democratic parties encouraged as a result of the 'quality' and 'connectedness' of civil society (Kubik 2005 and Cox 2007:284). Hirschman argues that societies are predisposed to oscillate between periods of intense preoccupation with public issues and periods of almost total concentration on individual improvement and private welfare goods (Hirschman [1982], 2002, Gremion 1999).

The issue of who tends to be involved and who does not has been a major one in this research and is investigated in chapters 5 and 6, e.g. public consultations in 5.4.1, turnouts in elections at various levels in 5.6 and local involvement and social cohesion in 6.1.5 and 6.6.

**Data on NGOs in Poland**

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are components of social movements and are considered to be core institutionalised manifestations of civil society. If civil societies in CEE are judged to be weak, the presence and activities of NGOs should be investigated. The first difficulty is to define what an NGO is. “The term “NGO” is shorthand for a wide range of formal and informal associations. There is little agreement about what NGOs are and perhaps even less about what they should be called” (Fisher 1997:447). However their number, membership and level of activity are taken to be the main indicators of the health of civil society (compare e.g. Cox 2007, Fisher 1997, Howard 2002, 2003, Kubik 2005, Ziółkowski 2005). Since it is difficult to say what an NGO is, it is also difficult to disqualify a loosely organised voluntary non-profit citizens’ group as not being an NGO. Consequently any statistics of NGOs should be treated with caution. A reliable comparative analysis of statistical data on NGOs is also hardly possible as there is no standardised methodology for information gathering. Kubik (2005:109) notices that in Poland the data are “contaminated” by the fact that some organisations are not officially registered and there are many “pseudo organisations” that exist only on paper. So there is the issue of under-reporting and over-reporting. In Poland there are 3 official data sources (see Table 2.1). They are the registry of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, registry of the Court of Justice and the REGON data (National Official Business Register). The problem is, there are discrepancies among the records in those registries (Ziółkowski 2005:42). The most reliable source is apparently the Jawor/Klon Association<sup>61</sup> database. Its records are unfortunately not updated (some are annotated)<sup>62</sup>. A detailed analysis of my new data is presented in chapter 6, section 6.2).

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<sup>61</sup> “The Klon/Jawor Association is a non-governmental organisation that supports the Polish voluntary sector by collecting and disseminating information. As Klon/Jawor Association is dedicated to the values of an open, creative, self-organising society, we believe information and knowledge to be empowering. We further our aim by developing the Information System for Polish NGOs and providing organisations with modern communication tools.” The Klon/Jawor Association, The Portal ngo.pl, <http://english.ngo.pl/x/100973>, accessed 16.05.2009.

<sup>62</sup> The Klon/Jawor Association Database, <http://www.klon.org.pl/x/30025;jsessionid=4EB7BC18F0EE97B2203A1178D60EB68D>, accessed 16.05.2009, The Portal ngo.pl <http://www.bazy.ngo.pl/>, accessed 16.05.2009.

Table 2.1. Number of NGOs in Poznań according to recognised databases

Database	Mid-November 2008	18 May 2009
Jawor/Klon	3,026	166 (public benefit <sup>63</sup> only)
Ministry of Justice	167 <sup>64</sup> (public benefit only)	-
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	28 <sup>65</sup>	177

Source: Based on the data in the quoted registries.

The numbers of NGOs in the Jawor/Klon Association database and those in the registries of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy differ greatly. Thus if research on the condition of civil society is limited to selected statistics on NGOs, it may produce a distorted picture<sup>66</sup>. The discrepancies can surely be attributed to the criteria used and reflect problems with defining ‘institutionalised’ forms of civil society. In Poland the long awaited<sup>67</sup> Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work (24 April 2003)<sup>68</sup> defined NGOs in Article 3, Clause 2 which reads:

The term ‘non-governmental organisations’ shall mean corporate and non-corporate entities not forming part of the public finance sector as described in the Public Finances Act, not operating for profit, and [not] formed against relevant legislative provisions, including foundations and associations, in recognition of clause 4 stipulations.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> ‘Public benefit’ is a qualification that applies to some NGOs. See Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work, dated 24 April, 2003 below.

<sup>64</sup> Ministry of Justice, National Registry records as of 10.11.2008, <http://opp.ms.gov.pl>, accessed 12.05.2009.

<sup>65</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Database of reports of NGOs [*Baza sprawozdań organizacji pożytku publicznego*], <http://bopp.pozytek.gov.pl/szukaj.do;jsessionid=09350E0319E9744FFDB0E951594F3A2E>, accessed 16.05.2009.

<sup>66</sup> Howard conducted interviews with average citizens as well thus his research included qualitative data too.

<sup>67</sup> In Poland until 2003 activities of non-governmental organisations were governed by old laws on foundations and associations. The laws date back to 1984 and 1989 respectively.

<sup>68</sup> Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work, dated 24 April 2003, Journal of Laws, 2003, No. 96, Item 873, English version:

<http://www.pozytek.gov.pl/Public.Benefit.and.Volunteer.Work,Act,567.html?PHPSESSID=2153532d084d4e594f2cc0b547df3842>, accessed 20.08.2010. For a comprehensive review of the situation of NGOs in Poland see United States International Grantmaking, ‘Poland Country Information’, <http://www.usig.org/countryinfo/poland.asp>, accessed 10.09.2010.

<sup>69</sup> Clause 4 disqualified political parties, trade unions or employer organisations, professional self-governing authorities, some foundations and companies operating under legislation of physical culture and sports. Foundations disqualified as NGOs include foundations of political parties and foundations for whom the State Treasury or a local authority organisation are the sole founder, unless: (a) separate provisions stipulate otherwise, (b) a foundation’s property in its entirety is not recognised as property of the state, municipal property, or publicly financed property as understood in the Public Finance Act, or (c) a foundation engaged in academic research work under its statutory operations.

This Act legally recognised activities *pro publico bono* but imposed severe restrictions on organisations and other entities applying for the ‘public benefit’ [*bona fide*] status<sup>70</sup>. Public benefit organisations are ‘elite’ organisations that in exchange for taking on certain tasks and obligations, are granted benefits and privileges including the possibility of acquiring real estates on a preferential basis and free access to public TV. The Act has created a new incentive that benefits such organisations. It permits a personal income taxpayer to allocate 1% of his or her tax payment to a public benefit organisation.<sup>71</sup> In Poland, however, not only the ‘elite’ public benefit NGOs are active in public life. The differences in Table 2.1 demonstrate that the picture of civil society can be distorted by the criteria used to define its organisations. This is especially the case if a broad definition of civil society is narrowed by the criteria used in national laws and regulations. The issue of NGOs is investigated in chapter 6.

If Polish civil society is weak, the involvement of public authorities in democratisation is worth investigating. In the case of the city of Poznań, the Local Act of the City Council<sup>72</sup> reads that, for the city of Poznań, the Act is the legal foundation for allocating public resources to NGOs and that cooperation shall be based on principles of partnership, effectiveness, subsidiarity and transparency in the realisation of public aims while respecting the sovereignty of the parties involved. It means that in Poland NGOs as part of civil society are recognised as organised forms of public social life which are autonomous from the state though bound by the legal order. In the Act, the local authorities of Poznań declare their wish and willingness to cooperate with NGOs. The declaration follows from the recognition on the part of the authorities of Poznań that it is their goal to fulfil the collective needs of the citizens and of the role of active citizenship in solving problems relevant to local communities. The Poznań Act suggests that local authorities have partners in civil society. Whether this is true is investigated in my analytical chapters.

The Polish Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work and the recent Poznań Act on the cooperation of local authorities with civil society organisations lead to a number of other

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<sup>70</sup> ‘Public benefit organisation’ (*organizacja pożytku publicznego*). See as well: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Department of Public Benefit, ‘Public Benefit Organizations’, <http://www.pozytek.gov.pl/Public,Benefit,Organizations,554.html> accessed 01.08.2010.

<sup>71</sup> Up to 1% of his or her income in a fiscal year.

<sup>72</sup> Poznań City Council’s Act on the 2009 Cooperation Programme of the City of Poznań with NGOs, juristic persons and organisational units the cooperation with which is regulated by regulations on the relations of the State and the Catholic Church and Other Churches and religious communities, and associations of units territorial self-government, dated 8 March 2008, No. XL/430/V/2008.



questions. There are registered non-profit organisations but what are the other manifestations of civil society? In Poznań there are Estate Councils all activities of which are financed by the City of Poznań. Can Estate Councils which are community-based be treated as manifestations or organisations of civil society? Answers to these questions may challenge my working definition of civil society.

### **2.3. Civil society and political society in times of regime change**

Relations between civil society and political society in the context of the regime change need to be reviewed in order to debate the issue of local democratic consolidation. It is at the local level where various forms of civil society manifest themselves and have a share in governance. References to the experience of different countries in the region are made, however the focus is on explaining the idea of civil society as a society that organises itself ‘from the bottom up’. That is why the issue of local government is introduced at this stage.

This section starts with a review of the early concepts of civil society in CEE (2.3.1). Attention is drawn to the early philosophy of CEE democratisation, the changing role of civil society in the processes of democratisation and the embedding of democracy as well as to the beginnings of new political societies after 1989. In Poland, in particular, the self-organisation of society to pursue democratic reforms was an important issue for Solidarity leaders before and during 1989-1991. I discuss developments related to the initially very strong social involvement and later demobilisation and mistrust in authorities. Relationships between a social pluralistic mass movement and the new political society are in focus. In 2.3.1 I also discuss how civil society was re-invented after 1989 pointing to the relevance of the local government reforms in Poland. Subsection 2.3.2 is devoted to the building of local democracy and the focus is on the reconstruction of local government in the region. (Polish reforms aiming at the democratisation of local government after 1989 are reviewed in chapter 3.)

Devolution and local government autonomy were an important part of post-1989 democratisation processes in CEE. While designing the Polish transformation process the leaders adopted a ‘neo-Tocquevillean’ approach. As in the result of the ‘pacted’ transition the communists were still in power so it was even more crucial to implement reforms channelling/including the social activity (civil society). Reformers focused on the decentralisation (*cf.* Myant 2005) of Polish local government (see chapters 3 and 5) following the idea that the best method of democratisation is to learn how to practise

democracy at ‘the bottom’ where the revitalisation of *associative life* and a revival of *active civil education* were both most workable and likely. In Poland the legal framework for self-governance was ensured with the first reforms. (In Polish local government is called *samorząd* emphasising the idea of self-governance.) It was assumed that citizens’ organisation to support local democratic institutions would be conducive to the emergence of a new informed civil society<sup>73</sup> which subsequently would play an important role in democratic consolidation (Crawford 1997:108 and chapter 3, section 3.3). In CEE civil societies prior to the introduction of democratic reforms differed much from an established civil society. In the process of consolidating new CEE democracies, they had to become accustomed to the situation where dispute, rivalry, competition, spontaneity and conflict are part of everyday politics. In Poland local self-government reforms aimed at the provision of a friendly environment to enhance the growth of a new civil society. It follows that the strength of civil society should be debated in the context of the quality of local democracy. At the same time due attention must be paid to the emergence of a new political society.

### 2.3.1. ‘Ethical’ civil society and the emergence of a new political society

In Poland in 1989 the common idealistic approach - the existence of the Polish *ethical nation* with its *ethical civil society* - prevailed. The enthusiasm and strength of the Solidarity mass movement was perceived by many as promising strong citizens’ support for the reforms. High hopes were reflected in the conviction that by having a strong civil society everything could be achieved. “Civil society and morality were expected to facilitate social and political change both at the national and European level.” (Pribean 2005:566). Smolar (1996) draws attention to the vocabulary omnipresent in the public discourse of 1989. “The peaceful revolutions of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe were carried out in the name of ‘civil’ society, and the related word ‘citizen’<sup>74</sup> was one of the most frequently used in the public discourse of that time. Citizens’ committees, citizens’ movements, citizens’ assemblies, citizens’ initiatives, citizens’ parliamentary clubs, and citizens’ parties all sprang into being.” (Smolar 1996:24). The enthusiasm and atmosphere of 1989 (e.g. Ekiert and Kubik 1999 or Smolar 1996 and Jałowiecki 2005:25) was

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<sup>73</sup> An in-depth discussion on the democratic character of the local government reforms in Poland after 1989 is presented in chapter 3.

<sup>74</sup> In communist Poland, the word *obywatel* [citizen] was the formal address form used by authorities to address a person having Polish citizenship [*obywatelstwo*]. The Solidarity mass movement was *obywatelski* [citizens’]. It was the movement of people who had Polish citizenship and were not part of any state authority.

conducive to the simplistic re-identification of *obywatelski* [citizens'] with civil/civic. Wałęsa and Havel did emphasise the value of citizens' participation, checks on power and decentralised authorities (Yoder 2003:280), i.e. they valued standard features of civil society. "In post-communist Central Europe, civil society was perceived as a specific tradition that had strong symbolic value during the communist period and the early phases of post-communist constitution-making." (Priban 2005:565). Both the histories of civil society and democratic traditions were different in every country of Central and East Europe but "civil society always retained the strong symbolic value of being a suppressed social structure in which human dignity and autonomy used to be guaranteed and which survived in dissident circles during the communist era" (Priban 2005:566). In 1989 Bronisław Geremek enthusiastically declared: "We don't need to define it [civil society]. We see it and feel it." (quoted in Lewis 1989). In 1994<sup>75</sup> Vaclav Havel, like Geremek, was, in my opinion, operating semantically with pathos using the then vague terms referring to idealistic 'standard' (normative) features of civil society the actual reference of which at the time was vague for society. He defined civil society as:

[...] a society with a large measure of self-government, where citizens assume their role in public affairs. Citizens must shoulder their share of responsibility for social development. Civil society is a social space that fosters the feeling of solidarity between people and love for one's community. There are various minority needs that a representative democracy cannot, in its present form, safeguard. Civil society encourages ordinary people to participate in government, thereby strengthening relations between citizens and their state. (Havel and Klaus, with commentary by Pithart 1996:18)

Not that all politicians in CEE held this idealistic view of civil society. Vaclav Klaus, for example, undermined the role of civil society in a democratic society saying:

I am a little confused by the use of the term 'civil society'. It seems to have become a hollow phrase that I would rather not use. [In the elections] we voted for something else. We voted for a democratic society whose bedrock is individual freedom. That which lies above the citizen is derived from him. Therefore, the term "civil society" seems to me a bit superfluous. I am not sure we need to keep writing and philosophizing on one or another side of this polemic. (Havel and Klaus, with commentary by Pithart 1996:18)

Being a liberal reformer, Klaus saw group solidarity as "a potential source of stifling corporatism and a threat to market-based-reforms" (Smolar 1996:33). Havel's civil society idea was 'aberrant' to Klaus.

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<sup>75</sup> An extract from a discussion aired on Czech Television on 25 May 1994.

In Poland, 1989-1990 was “the honeymoon of transformation” according to Ziółkowski (2005:42). The ‘honeymoon’ lasted for one year. There was a very strong popular support for changing the system and for establishing new authorities. In an ideal ‘standard’ situation, civil society is informing, pressuring and periodically renewing political society (Linz and Stepan 1996:10) but in the early 1990s Poland’s new political society dominated and civil society had to redefine itself to balance political society.

Priban (2005) points out that the dissident concept of civil society heavily romanticised the spontaneous order of liberal societies: “The difference between civil society and totalitarianism was the focus of one of the most prominent criticism of the communist system based on the difference between moral and immoral politics.” (2005:256). Havel advocated practising ‘non-political politics’ and ‘politics as morality in practice’ (*cf.* Havel and Klaus, with commentary by Pithart 1996). Linz and Stepan (1996) argue that differences between civil society in communist states and the requirements of democratic political society should be discussed in terms of eight dimensions: basis of action (ethics of truth vs. interest based), actors (ethical nation vs. groups), attitude to internal differences (negative vs. normal), attitude to internal conflicts (suppression vs. aggregation and representation), attitude to compromise and routinised institutions (negative vs. positive), anti-politics (negative vs. positive) and operation arena (outside the state vs. on the political arena) (see also Fagan 2005). They argue that ‘ethical civil society’ in Poland deviated from the requirements of democratic political society along all eight dimensions. Renwick (2006) analyzes Linz and Stepan’s account of the claimed contrast between civil society under communism and the requisites of political society and concludes that “the dominant strand of dissident thought in Poland fitted ethical society only in the last of its eight dimensions [operation area] (last two if anti-politics is taken in its weaker sense) – and even then only partially and questionably. In a further two dimensions – concerning suppression of internal differences and conflict – dissident practice often resembled ethical civil society, but only for strategic reasons particular to the context of anti-communist struggle. In the remaining four dimensions, Poland’s dissidents deviated far from ethical civil society in both their thinking and their practice.” (Renwick 2006:313). His arguments are as follows. The advocated ethics of truth – Havel’s ‘living in truth’<sup>76</sup> - contradicts the fact that political society is interest-based. Renwick (2006:303) notices that in the realm of

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<sup>76</sup> The moral discourse of ‘truth’ and the existential claim of ‘living in the truth’ dominated the language and conducts associated with the idea of civil society (Linz and Stepan 1996:271).

ethical civil society, the main role is played by the ethical nation. In political society, on the other hand, different groups are expected to emerge. In the idealistic view of a mass movement as a monolith, internal differences are a negative feature and internal conflicts are sought to be suppressed whereas political society sees internal differences as part of a regular process of interactions and seeks to organise, aggregate, and represent internal conflicts. Political society approves of compromise and routinised institutions and disapproves of 'anti-politics'. Ethical civil society seeks to operate outside the state whereas political society strives to direct it (Renwick 2006:303). This suggests that the Polish opposition under communism adhered initially to a monopolistic concept of civil society, i.e. the state versus society or us versus them dichotomy. Already in 1989, divisions within the Solidarity led government and among Solidarity supported MPs surfaced. Some advocated a slower and less painful transition to a market system, accompanied with strong social welfare support, and others advocated a faster and harder course. Economic hardships and social costs of the transition contributed to popular dissatisfaction with the first outcomes of the transformation process. In Poland with rocketing levels of unemployment (5.9% in November 1990, 16.9% in July 1994), individuals had to concentrate on looking for jobs to protect their families and secure basic needs (private life) rather than involve themselves in public/civic activities. Six years after Solidarity won parliamentary elections Smolar wrote that in 1996 Polish society seemed to be even more atomised than it was during the final year of communism: "People seem to feel 'lost' in the new reality of postcommunism" (Smolar 1996:34). Economic hardships and the unstable political arena (see chapter 5, section 5.3.1) threatened the feeling of stabilisation and security which is essential to human beings' satisfaction with life.

Political parties and party system institutionalisation are treated as a prerequisite of democratic consolidation. Under communism Poles viewed the realm of party politics as immoral and corrupt. In 1990-1993 the political arena in Poland was highly unstable<sup>77</sup>. In 1993, over 200 new political parties were registered. In Poland party system institutionalisation met with a popular lack of approval. Mistrust in political elites started

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<sup>77</sup> The 1989 parliamentary election gave victory to Solidarity which entered into government and became part of a new political society. In 1989 Solidarity supported MPs formed the *Obywatelski Klub Parlamentarny* [OKP, Citizens' Parliamentary Club] which had 161 members. OKP was not a political party but acted as one. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1990 the new parliamentary Act of Political Parties was passed (changed in 1997) and first Solidarity based political parties were registered.

to grow<sup>78</sup>. The public feared the risk of political parties serving their own good and the dispute centred on civic issues and loyalty. In Polish, *upolitycznienie* [politicisation], has long had negative connotations for historical reasons, especially, when seen from the 'romantic' perspective of idealistic features of civil society prevailing in the period of the Solidarity mass movement and the initially popular support of the transformation. Unfortunately but expectedly fierce debates and abrupt changes on the political arena along with the hardships which Polish society suffered in the process of economic reforms contributed to the occurrence of the displaced person syndrome in the society, i.e. alienation that was conducive to mistrust within society which in turn had a negative effect on the much needed stabilisation/consolidation of democracy.

One of most interesting and complex democratic developments after 1989 has been the evolution of the 1989 (ethical) civil society into a civil society the features of which would match my working definition of civil society (see 2.2.1). Pluralism and diversity are essential features of civil society. In late 1980s Solidarity had to strive to be perceived as a cohesive movement to reach its goals. At the same time it articulated pluralism and was pluralistic in its composition. Renwick in his article (2006:308) quoted Lech Wałęsa who in 1987 in his Statement on the Preparations for the Referendum declared that "Solidarity is in favour of restructuring public life according to the principle of three pluralisms: economic, social, and political". The "Joint Declaration by Solidarity Leaders and Polish Intellectuals, Gdańsk, 11 September 1988" also stressed the need for other independent organisations alongside Solidarity. From the perspective of almost two decades, I think that, in effect, social pluralism which according to Wałęsa was to be one of the principles of the new public life was crucial to Poland's democratic consolidation.

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<sup>78</sup> On the topic of trust and mistrust see Agh 1998; Bernhard 1996; Coleman 1994; Cox 2007; Diamond 1994; Ekiert and Kubik 1997, 1999; Ekiert, Kubik and Vachudowa 2007; Fukuyama 1995; Hayden 1994; Howard 2002; Jałowiecki 2005; Kilby 2002; Nowak and Nowosielski 2005; Paczyńska 2005; Priban 2005; Przerworski 1993; Putnam 1993, 1995; Schimmelfenning 2007; Smolar 1996; Sztompka 1996, 1999; Taras 1997; Ziółkowski 2005.

### 2.3.2. The building of local democracy

As a consequence of CEE's communist past, civil society in 1989 was much less developed in CEE than in the West. In the early 1990s the discussion on the place and condition of civil society within Central and East European societies continued and influenced the reforms of local government introduced in the countries of the region.

The issue of the building of local democracy was of great importance to Polish reformers and to Poland's democratic consolidation. At its foundation laid the stipulation that through re-building strong civil society at the local level it is possible that communities would take local issues into their own hands (Jałowicki 2005:25). Thus it was at the level of local government where significant part of the civic activity's potential was to be incorporated (Bondyra, Szczepański and Śliwa 2005:7). For community involvement to become meaningful an appropriate legislature was to be designed and civil society had to organise itself anew. Emergence of new democratic institutions and civic activities has lead to new cooperation patterns in local democracy. In Poland communities had many needs as first of all the technical infrastructure was poor. The need to modernise the infrastructure was urgent and local government was both pushed and supported by local communities in this endeavour. Bondyra (2005:304) underlined that making up for the elementary infrastructural backlogs within *gminas* has been strongly interlinked with the potential of self-organisation of citizens. The claim that there is interdependence between the functioning of local governments and local civil society in young democracies was pronounced not only in reference to Poland but to the CEE region (e.g. Skapska 1997, Yoder 2003). Therefore, the interdependence between the functioning of local governments and local civil society is to be thoroughly discussed in my analytical chapters.

The transformation from communist centralism to the system of democratic local self-government was not just a political and administrative decision but was strongly linked with the concept of civil society and the actual rebuilding of strong civil society. The reforming of local government started as early as in 1990. The underlying principles were dualism of government (active participation of citizens in governing) and local governments as a basic form of public life of local community. Devolution (de-centralisation) and local government autonomy were fundamental elements of the post-1989 processes aiming at the consolidation of democracy.

Many countries in Central and East Europe have experienced a debate between two extremes – the statist model of local government, whereby local government would be a mere instrument of the state, and the civil society model, according to which local (self)-government emanates directly from the people. Which model is favoured determines the approach taken to territorial reform and to the size and number of levels of local authorities. There is a natural trade-off between small, first-level authorities (close to the people) and large first-level authorities – greater capacity for service delivery. (Campbell and Coulson 2006:556)

Swianiewicz (2005) writes that both extremes in fact favoured small local government units (see also Devas and Delay 2006:680). In CEE two different groups of countries can be distinguished: those that are territorially fragmented and those which are territorially consolidated (see table 2.2). This distinction is based on the size of the smallest administrative units which local governments cover. Territorially fragmented are e.g. the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Poland and Bulgaria are examples of territorially consolidated countries (Swianiewicz 2002a:297).

Table 2.2. Average Size of (Municipal) Local Governments in Selected European Countries

Country	Average Population	Average Area (km <sup>2</sup> )
Bulgaria	35,000	432
Poland	16,000	130
Hungary	3,300	32
Slovakia	1,900	17
Czech Republic	1,700	13

Source: Table based on Swianiewicz (2002a)

Swianiewicz (2002a:297) underlines that “[i]t seems inevitable that allocation of functions, relationship between municipalities, other tiers of administration, as well as the everyday functioning of local governments, must differ.” He argues that one of the reasons has been the perception of the main values of local democracy.

There is some evidence that in the Czech and Slovak Republics the communitarian approach, seeing first and foremost the representational role of local government, has been dominant. While in Poland, the more liberal attitude, placing more emphasis on efficiency in local service delivery, has been more visible [...]. The former approach led to the “freedom of fragmentation” while the latter demanded maintenance of the larger local government units. (Swianiewicz 2002a:297)

In the statist model (e.g. Czech and Slovak Republics), local democracy is limited to small local communities and state territorial agencies are responsible for delivering most services. In the civil society model, local communities, societies in small territorial units can exercise local democracy via civil society collectively influencing service delivery.



In Poland the reform of local government followed the civil society model. In 1996 Smolar argued that:

Actual postcommunist civil society, which is rising atop the ruins of the old system, is composed partly of elements left over from this system and partly from the heritage of a more remote past. Civil society is being created in an unfavourable atmosphere of economic recession, withdrawal from public affairs, egoistic individualism, mistrust, and lack of legal culture. (Smolar 1996:37)

In the 1990s the level of its organisation mirrored the advancement of the learning process and was negatively influenced by the instability of the political scene.

For the later analysis (chapter 3) it needs to be emphasised that in the 1990s the concepts of accountability and public service had no meaning or rather no content in post-communist CEE.

Decentralisation and regionalisation were influenced by the political ideas and visions of the political actors in the transition period. Regional reforms tended to be favoured by organisations and individuals who, before the collapse of communism, were associated with the democratic opposition. (Yoder 2003:280)

It is apparent that for community involvement to be a meaningful and sustainable part of local decision-making processes, an appropriate cooperation-friendly environment needs to be created, i.e. decision-making processes should be accountable, transparent and the input from local communities should inform decision-making (Purdam and Crisp 2009). The issue of the environment and of cooperation patterns at the local level will be elaborated in chapter 6. The challenge is to assess the functioning of local democracy where the activities and interactions of local authorities and communities are pivotal. The functioning of civil society at the local level can be assessed through two perspectives, i.e. local authorities' view and views of local communities. This calls for case studies. Polish examples of an assessment based on local authorities' views are Bondyra's (2005) research on conditionings of local development in the Wielkopolskie Voivodship conducted through in-depth interviews with gminas' leaders (wójt in case of rural gminas, burmistrz in case of urban gminas) within the region and Matczak's (2006) research on assessment of local communities' involvement in local affairs by Estate councillors in Poznań. Geisler's research (2005a and 2005b) on civil society and social capital in Upper Silesia is an example of an assessment based on views of local residents as it concentrates on the actions of citizens to create a regional society. In my analytical chapters due attention is given to both perspectives to assess the impact of both local government and local

communities on policy making. The objective is to fill the gap on the actual input the two have on the quality of Polish local democracy through my case study on one of biggest cities in Poland. In the UK the impact of community engagement on policy making and local democracy (how to conceptualised and measure it) and the aspects of environment that local authorities need to create for local civil society (including implementation of innovative technologies) is debated (see for example Purdam and Crisp 2009, Andrews and Turner 2006, Goodwin 2005). This literature has been based on case studies (e.g. Goodwin 2005: the Case of Birmingham City Council). However, I will not explicitly refer to case studies on local democracy in old democracies as comparisons are hardly possible due to different environments and traditions.

The learning process inherent to the ‘neo-Tocquevillean’ approach affected both citizens and local governments, not to mention the results of national parliamentary elections so far. In the 1990s essential characteristics of the learning process were the on-going discovery of new democratic procedures and their practice, re-identification of personal, local and political parties’ interests and goals, and learning from mistakes. It may be claimed that the re-invention of civil society was achieved through the local government reforms which had the potential to change local residents’ perception of their role in decision-making processes. By re-invention of civil society in postcommunist countries I mean primarily its manifestations in the form of informed activities. The new situation enhanced the rethinking of Havel’s ‘the methods of thinking that enable citizens to trust’ (Havel in Myant 2005:248).

Polish civil society was pluralistic. It wanted to control public authorities and tried to (elections and abrogation referenda). Campbell and Coulson (2006) while describing local democracy in Central and Eastern Europe refer to Swianiewicz’s (2005) observations about the evolution of local government in Poland and write that “whilst the broader community governance agenda appeals to local leaders, there is a lack of skills and confidence in moving outside the local government in the sense of administration of services” (Campbell and Coulson 2006:545). In a way in Poland civil society as the concept of the self-organisation of society from the bottom was after 1989 imposed from the top. They also refer to Dowley’s (2006) argument that the weakness of local democracy in CEE countries lies in the lack of engagement of civil society organisations with the political system. In this context Ziółkowski’s (2005) observation that in Poland the political party system is weak should be recalled. The validity of Campbell and

Coulson's<sup>79</sup> observations are verified in chapters 5 and 6 by the example of Poznań local government's coexistence with civil society.

The city of Poznań is potentially an example of a favourable context for the development of civil society in Poland. Although detailed justification of the selection of Poznań as a case study including two of its sub-local Estates is presented in chapter 4, section 4.4, at this point it needs to be emphasised that it has been chosen as the object of my case study mainly because it has community-based Estates and long traditions of self-government and civil society. Poznań is Poland's fifth largest city after Warsaw, Łódź, Kraków and Wrocław. In Warsaw and Kraków there are no community-based Estates. In Łódź, members of Estate Boards get small monthly allowances; in Wrocław only Estate chairpersons get a monthly allowance which is higher than in Łódź. In Poznań there are no allowances for Estate councillors. Thus in Poznań the voluntary aspect of civil society's involvement in self-governing is the strongest in the 5 biggest Polish cities. Socio-demographical changes taking place within Poznań are symptomatic for the changes in all Polish cities (Parysek and Mierzejewska 2006).

## 2.4. Conclusion

The transformation period was economically difficult for CEE societies. Collapsing communist monopolies, high unemployment levels, unstable macroeconomics and - at the same time – instability in the political arena and lack of understanding of the necessary changes led to disillusionment with the paths of reforms and 'democracy'. This situation was not conducive to democratic consolidation (*cf.* for example Pridham and Agh 2001).

Polish reformers opted for a 'neo-Tocquevillean' approach to embed local democracy. The legal frameworks were provided by local government reforms. What was necessary was a re-invention of civil society. Given the complexity and depth of changes in the 1990s, it needs to be investigated if a new civil society emerged, what it consists of and whether new civil society organisations are effective.

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<sup>79</sup> The global relevance of discussions in ECE was noticed by Campbell and Coulson who in 2006 wrote: "The debates and discussions in Central and Eastern Europe have done much to remind those of us in the West that local governments are political institutions, the expression of the will of people in a local area – a message that needs to be rediscovered in West Europe and elsewhere." (Campbell and Coulson 2006:558). Interestingly, in 1997 with the new Labour government, the issue of *local governance* began to be debated in the UK (e.g. Wollmann 2004).

The above discussion leads to a number of questions e.g. why some actions are perceived as negative or positive and by whom, who tends to be involved and who does not, whether local authorities have partners in civil society, and how to examine the condition of Polish civil society. Civil society can help strengthen democracy by making local authorities more efficient and accountable. Evidence for civil society and political authorities' cooperation or lack of cooperation can be seen at the local level more clearly. A micro-scale analysis can highlight issues and developments that may pass unnoticed when (national) macro-scale analyses are attempted. Troubles with definitions can be eased by giving examples of what government and civil society see as their achievements and obstacles. In my analytical chapters I investigate the condition of civil society in Poznań. I put my working definition of civil society to a test investigating whether the civil society of Poznań is voluntary, self-generating and gives rise to a self-governing organised social life. The objective is to assess the current strength of civil society and the quality of local democracy. Results will point to the advancement of democratic consolidation.

There is a relative lack of research on local civil society and democratic consolidation in the context of Poland and CEE countries (e.g. Cox 2007, Howard 2003, Swianiewicz 2002b, Ziółkowski 2005). Much of the research on CEE democratic consolidation and particularly the role of civil society has focused on its working at the national level. The number of case study research on Poland is extremely low (*cf.* Bondyra 2005, Matczak 2006, Geisler 2005a, 2005b and references in their publications). This thesis helps fill the gap in the understanding of democratic consolidation processes in Poland after 1989 by investigating the functioning of local democracy, in particular the relations between local self-government and civil society.

### **3. Establishing a system of local government in post-Communist Poland: its rationale and structure**

Among the CEE countries Poland was the first to embark upon the transition to democracy<sup>80</sup>. The goal of the reformers was to build a democratic country based on the rule of law (Kotulski 2002:45) within which a prime objective was to create democratic structures for the country's local authorities. As Trnski (2005:26) claims: "The state as an entity is based upon an actor-centred approach". Actors include the elected politicians who become part of central legislative and executive bodies/institutions, but also those who are involved more locally. The objective of decentralisation was understood as comprising a range of processes leading to a shift of administrative competences from the central government to lower levels of the territorial organisation of the state<sup>81</sup>. This was the core of Poland's complex democratic transition. Provisions for territorial pluralism were viewed as essential to dismantling the centralised system of government. Reforming the local level, where contacts with the citizenry are most frequent and most salient, targeted the weakest link in what had been a highly centralised state.

This chapter consists of four sections the objective of which is to position modern Polish local government in both its historical and more recent contexts. A system of local government should enjoy sufficient autonomy and responsibilities so that it can meet the demands/needs of its local population, a goal which provides the background to the discussion here of recent developments in Poland. Firstly (in section 3.1), the position of Polish local government before 1989 during the communist period is reviewed. Subsequently, the nature of local government (3.2) is debated against the backdrop of the Polish concept of local *gmina* self-government. It firstly draws on history to focus on discussing local government's *autonomy* and its limitations. Then the other 4 attributes of 'a healthy democracy', i.e. *representativeness*, *accountability*, *effectiveness* and *responsiveness* (e.g. Sharpe 1970, Kjellberg 1995, Swianiewicz 2001a, Mellors and Coppethwaite 1987) are introduced. This entails a discussion of the relations between local government and the state, local government and the community, and of local democracy. The next section (3.3) is devoted to the post-1989 local government reforms. Finally, in section 3.4, the present position of Polish local government is explored, in particular the

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<sup>80</sup> Poland at the time had its first non-communist government in over 40 years (Holmes 1997) but fully democratic parliament (end of pacted transition) in 1991.

<sup>81</sup> 'Actor' in this sense is *podmiot* in Polish.

level of its political and fiscal autonomy, as well as the laws relevant to the exercise of local democracy (particularly elections and referenda) together with the powers that are available to local authorities to enable them to devolve responsibilities to the sub-local level, to (for example) individual areas within the *gmina*.

### **3.1. Centralisation and its outcomes (1945-1989)**

Following 1989, fundamental changes to the nature and working of the state in Poland were inevitable where the inherited state, while functioning, was organised and deeply imbued by its communist status. Critical here to the emerging debates surrounding democratisation was the role decentralisation would play in what had been a highly centralised state. In this section the situation of local government in Poland under the communist rule is discussed. Attention is drawn to territorial administration reforms, introduction of National (local) Councils and the actual power being monopolised by apparatchiks.

After the Second World War Poland became a Soviet satellite country and its pro-Soviet government gradually centralised all decision-making processes. Having taken power in Poland, the communists arbitrarily rejected the April 1935 Constitution (see section 3.2). Local self-government was judged to be a remnant of capitalism (*cf.* Pokładecki 1996:31 quoting Rybicki 1971) and was abolished in 1950 by the Act on Territorial Units of the Unified State Administration (20.03.1950)<sup>82</sup>. This act was enacted to replace the standard local government mechanism with a system of elected National (People's) Councils (*radę narodowe*) (Jones 1951, Regulski 2003:13) based on the system of Soviets (councils) (Hill 1972). They were established at three levels, i.e. *voivodship* (province), *powiat* (county) and the basic rural *gmina* and municipality levels. In September 1954, 3,001 rural *gminas* and their National Councils were abolished and replaced with 8,789 *gromadas* [communities] of several villages and their local National Councils<sup>83</sup>. Until 1954, the local National Councils were not elected by the local residents but appointed by political and social organisations (Kulesza 1988:69). In December 1954, the first elections<sup>84</sup> to National

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<sup>82</sup> Act on Territorial Units of the Unified State Administration, dated 20 March 1950, Journal of Laws, 1950, No. 14, Item 130.

<sup>83</sup> Act on the Reform of Administrative Division of Rural Areas and Establishment of *Gromadas*' Local National Councils, dated 25 September 1954, Journal of Laws, 1954, No. 43, Item 191.

<sup>84</sup> Casting a vote was an unwritten obligation. Abstainers were ostracised (e.g. Wypych 2005:124). The turnout was high (95% and higher), same situation was at the parliamentary level where turnout in 1952 was 95.03% and in 1957 94.14% (average for years 1952-1976 96.35%) (Sakwa and Crouch 1978:417).

Councils at all three tiers took place. Candidates could be nominated only by political parties (PZPR - Polish United Workers' Party and two 'concessioned' parties which approved of the supremacy of PZPR: the agrarian ZSL – United Peasants' Party and SD – official name in English: Democratic Party), professional associations and cooperatives. This severely limited the representativeness of the Councils. It also destroyed Poland's democratic self-government structures established in 1918-1945.

The role of local National Councils was highly restricted. They were not accountable to the people but to National Councils 'higher' in the hierarchy<sup>85</sup>. Their functions were to be dual, i.e. both those of a body that was 'a representation of the people' and of a unit of state administration. In reality, local National Councils were merely executive bodies of state administration. Vertical dependencies were strong as the competencies of local National Councils were limited and power was monopolised, i.e. it was in hands of members of the communist party at all levels. Communist authorities disregarded the interests of local communities. The abolition of democratic local self-government was accompanied by the abolition of the property of local self-government which became part of the unified state property fund (*jednolity fundusz własności państwowej*, cf. Pokładecki 1996:31). In actual fact there was no communal property<sup>86</sup>. Big cities were administratively divided into Districts<sup>87</sup> where National District Councils were established. In 1958 another major Act defining the National Councils<sup>88</sup> was passed. The role of the local National Council was reduced further where power was transferred to its presidium which could take decisions on its own. The presidium organised the council's work and represented the council externally. While Stalin died in 1953 his dictatorial legacy persisted until the effects of the Khrushchev Thaw manifested themselves in various spheres in the 1960s (e.g. Pokładecki 1996:31). Even so, the system of government remained highly centralised.

Actually centralisation could be achieved by decentralist means where power was transferred to local communist leaderships (Kulesza 1988:71). Between 1972 and 1975 the Polish state administration was reformed twice. In 1972<sup>89</sup>, rural *gminas* were restored but

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<sup>85</sup> *Gromada* / municipal district (borough) > powiat/city > voivodship > central government.

<sup>86</sup> There were only small-size private properties and the rest belonged to the state. In these circumstances no local 'government' could serve local communities. It represented the interest of the state only.

<sup>87</sup> See for an example chapter 1, section 1.3, Figure 1.4 (map for the division of Poznań).

<sup>88</sup> Act on National Councils, dated 25 January 1958, Journal of Laws, 1958, No. 5, Item 16.

<sup>89</sup> Act on Establishment of *Gminas* and on the Change of the Act on National People's Councils, dated 29 September 1972, Journal of Laws, 1972, No. 49, Item 312.

local National Councils at the *gmina* tier<sup>90</sup> were headed by single persons who were state officials (*naczelnik*, chief/leader) and the system became more authoritarian. *Gmina* leaders were appointed by voivods<sup>91</sup>. In 1975 the Act on Two-Tier Administrative Division of the State and on amending the Act on National Councils<sup>92</sup> abolished the traditional second tier, i.e. *powiat*. At that point all territorial units were headed by individuals vertically accountable to the state, and all leaders of administrative bodies were members of the communist party. At the same time the communist party (PZPR) felt that there was a need to increase control over voivodships by downsizing them. The number of voivodships was increased from 17 to 49 instituting smaller units (see Figure 3.1 below), the position of which was weaker within the state. At the same time more state officials were installed locally which strengthened the authoritarian system.

In 1983, the Act on the System of National Councils and Local Self-Government<sup>93</sup> appeared to run counter to the centralised system in Poland. Its Chapter 13 provided for establishing sub-local self-government institutions: rural *sołectwo*<sup>94</sup> in small villages and urban *osiedle* (housing estate) based on a housing cooperative, (see section 3.4 and discussion in chapter 5, section 5.1). Sub-local self-governments were elected by respective local communities but could be abrogated by the supervising local National Council. The Act provided for some local taxes to become part of local National Councils' budgets which gave the Councils some fiscal independence. However, the omnipresent state administration functioned, as it had before, could prioritise local "needs" ignoring the actual needs of local communities (cf. Pokładecki 1996:33).

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<sup>90</sup> At the *gmina* (basic) level there were 2,394 territorial units including 247 towns, 26 municipal districts, 1,546 rural *gminas* and 575 *gmina* units of a mixed urban and rural character.

<sup>91</sup> Voivods heading voivodships and *naczelniks* of *gminas* (also presidents of towns) were all given the status of state officials. They were appointed (in fact nominated) by the Prime Minister (*Przewodniczący Rady Państwa*). Formally their approval of a respective local National Council was needed.

<sup>92</sup> Act on Two-Tier Administrative Division of the State and on amending the Act on National Councils, dated 28 May 1975, Journal of Laws, 1975, No. 16, Item 91.

<sup>93</sup> Act on the System of National Councils and Local Self-Government, dated 20 July 1983, Journal of Laws, 1983, No. 41, Item 185.

<sup>94</sup> *Sołectwo* is a rural settlement smaller than *gmina*.



Figure 3.1 Administrative division of Poland between 1975-1998. Voivodships with capital cities.



Source: Miszczuk (2003:65)

As Svava (2003: 42) observes: “The objective of centralisation in an authoritarian state is to control public life.”. Thus, between 1975 and 1989 Poland had a two tier administrative system, the units of which were headed by state officials accountable to the central government and the communist party. Local National Councils were only formally accountable to their constituencies and had no power. Schopflin (2003) argues that all institutions created by the communist regime were regarded as illegitimate by a substantial part of the public and presented only a façade of democracy because they were emanations of a system that was seen as imposed and run by a manipulative elite. However, communism created its own fixed rules and “was not only an imposed system but had

created its own dynamics and a certain degree of social rootedness” (Rychard 1998:28). Even though in the late 1980s there was little popular understanding of democracy<sup>95</sup> and the role of democratic institutions, opposition against the state and its system was strong with numerous local Solidarity groups.

In Poland the political system was authoritarian. At the lowest local level of government, power was in hands of communist leaders detached from the community. Reformers assumed that local administration was the weakest link in the communist system and that the impact of democratisation at the lowest level of government would have a positive impact upon reforming the system as a whole:

there was a strong belief in local (self-)government as an antidote to the centralised state, and an institution through which people could gain control over their own lives, and regenerate and revitalise their communities. (Campbell and Coulson 2006:543)

Poland’s focus on reforming local government was first and foremost political decentralisation which entailed the introduction of democratic institutions at all levels.

[...] political decentralization means devolution of political authority or of electoral capacities to subnational actors. Typical examples are the popular election of governors and mayors, (previously appointed by local councils or by central authorities), constitutional reforms that reinforce the political autonomy of subnational governments, and electoral reforms designed to augment political competition at the local levels. (Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi 2008:4)

Such reforms would strengthen the political autonomy of local governments.

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<sup>95</sup> Under communism society (i.e. groups and individuals) were deprived of their civil liberties (cf. Blok 2006:179) and could not exercise democratic practices.

### **3.2. The concept of local government**

The concept of local government and its autonomy have been both long debated and conditioned by different traditions. *Autonomy* refers primarily to the relationship between the state - the central administration in particular - and local government and the extent to which local government can exercise power without central control. Today debates on local government include also issues of its *representativeness*, *accountability*, *effectiveness* and *responsiveness*. Together with autonomy these attributes of local government are considered essential of 'a healthy democracy' (e.g. Sharpe 1970, Kjellberg 1995, Swianiewicz 2001b, Mellors and Coppethwaite 1987). It follows that a debate about local government should in large part be a discussion of the interaction and interface between civil society and local government.

The Polish concept of local government is based on a community residing in a *gmina*. The word *gmina* derives from *gmin* meaning the commons (from German *gemein*) and hence *gmina* refers to a community<sup>96</sup>. The Polish concept of local government rests on the notion of a local government community. In Polish, local government is called *samorząd terytorialny*, i.e. territorial **self-government**. Self-government primarily emphasises local governments' political independence. Local government exercises public authority by performing public tasks assigned to it. Stanyer (1976:265) identifies local government with local administration. According to Svara (2003:42) administration refers to "the specific decisions, regulations, and practices employed to achieve policy objectives. As one would expect, administration is largely the domain of the bureaucracy." However it is important to distinguish between legislative (Council) and executive authorities (administration) within Polish local self-government. Svara (2003:36) interprets this as the dichotomy of policy and administration, i.e. "the relative roles and proper contributions of elected officials and appointed staff in policy making"<sup>97</sup>. In Poland *self-governance* at the local level traditionally emphasises the role of community and its elected local Council. In a debate on autonomy of any local government it is also essential to investigate relations

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<sup>96</sup> The *gmina* (firstly only rural) started to be used to denote a unit of state administration in the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> Century.

<sup>97</sup> The Policy-Administration Dichotomy Model: "The major elements of this primarily normative model are emphasis on democratic control of government and the rule of law. Policy is made by elected officials and implemented by administrations. Under these conditions, administrative discretion is permissible and expected – Doig has noted that Wilson stressed the need for administrators to exercise 'great powers' – but cannot extend to the formulation of policy. Insulation of administrative staff from elected officials is important both to eliminate corruption and also to avoid the inefficiency that results when elected officials interfere with the 'details of administration'. (Svara 2003:37).

between the state and local government in terms of power division. In this light the concept of local government is debated below.

What is important here is to review the changing concept of local government and to position its evolving nature after 1989 in the context of debates on local government *autonomy* and representative and direct (participatory) democracy. This leads to a discussion of attributes of healthy local democracy.

### **Local government and the state**

There is no single ‘theory’ of local government (Sharpe 1970, Stanyer 1976, Kjellberg 1995). The reason is that the concept of local government is interpreted differently. Stanyer (1976:265) writes:

[...] a ‘theory’ of local government is a list of reasons why local administration of public services through directly elected bodies, responsible to the citizens of an area, is superior to all other forms of decentralization.

The history of modern thinking about local government can be dated back to the French Revolution and to French and Prussian political ideas. At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century French philosophers articulated naturalistic theories advocating ‘pouvoir [power] municipal’, i.e. communal democracy which emphasised the autonomy of municipalities<sup>98</sup>. This approach is called ‘natural’ and suggests that local government is an intrinsic part of community life. Although, *de facto*, the ‘natural’ approach has been rejected as it challenged the unity of the nation state (*cf.* Wagstaff 1999:54)<sup>99</sup>, it is common nowadays to concede that “[...] the existence of local self-government is an essential element in the structure of a democratic state” (Kotulski 2002:47, trans. OM). The theory of local government’s natural genesis was very different from the ideas accompanying the institution of local government established in Prussia in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In reality Prussian local self-government was local (self)-administration under state control. The Prussian approach is called ‘functional’ - local government should exist only insofar as it helps the state as a whole to function better (e.g. Swianiewicz 2001a:20-21, Pokładecki 1996:12-13).

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<sup>98</sup> This idea was followed in the 1931 Constitution of Belgium which recognised municipal government to be the forth power.

<sup>99</sup> This refers to dividing the power between state administration and local government. Later also Liberalism and democratic Constitutionalism uncovered the weakness of the French ‘fourth power’, i.e. of ‘pouvoir municipal’.

My reference to the French Revolution and communal democracy are relevant in the context of the Polish tradition of local government. At that time (1789-1799) Poland did not exist as a state. The years 1795-1918 were the time of Polish statelessness as Poland was carved up between three powers: Prussia, Russia and the Habsburg Empire<sup>100</sup>. These powers instituted their models of local government in the parts of Poland they incorporated into their territories (Kulesza 1988:65)<sup>101</sup>. Only after the First World War, in 1918, did Poland regain independence, i.e. after 123 years. Its administrative structure was scattered as it had 'inherited' three different administrative systems from the partitioning powers. The structure of the state had to be designed anew. Issues of what to centralise, and what not, were vigorously debated including what should be the responsibilities of local government.

In 1921 the March Constitution<sup>102</sup> prepared the ground for the unification of the local self-government system in Poland. Its Article 3 emphasised that the state was to be organised on the principle of local governance to which bodies legislative competencies were to be passed in subsequent Acts and were to include competencies in the areas of administration, culture and economy. Poland was to have a three tier administrative system with voivodships (provinces/regions)<sup>103</sup>, poviats, and *gminas* (Article 65). The unification and democratisation of local government were highly complex undertakings. Debates which accompanied designing local self-government focused on its juristic<sup>104</sup> and public authority status. Generally speaking the process was completed with the Act on Local Self-Government<sup>105</sup> passed on 23 March 1933 (*cf.* Pokładecki 1996:16-25; Piasecki 2002:15,

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<sup>100</sup> In three stages: in 1772, 1793 and 1795.

<sup>101</sup> "In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Polish provinces under Austria-Hungarian rule enjoyed a large degree of autonomy. In the Prussian part also there was some form of local self-government. But in the territories under Russian control there was none, apart from in the rural areas." (Kulesza 1988:65).

<sup>102</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, dated 17 March 1921, Journal of Laws, 1921, No. 44, Item 267. This Act is also referred to as March Constitution [*Konstytucja Marcowa*].

<sup>103</sup> The historical concept of voivodships was reborn. A similar system of self-government "had been in the territories formerly occupied by Prussia: in the other provinces of Poland there had been no self-government at this level." (Kulesza 1988:65).

<sup>104</sup> Juristic authority refers to the status of a juristic person (Scottish law), legal person or "Juridical person, in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), means any legal entity duly constituted or otherwise organised under applicable law, whether for profit or otherwise, and whether privately-owned or governmentally-owned, including any corporation, trust, partnership, joint venture, sole proprietorship or association.", OECD, 'Glossary of Statistical Terms', <http://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=4357>, accessed 17.06.2010. The term is used to distinguish between physical (human) and juristic persons which is close to the distinction between 'natural' and 'artificial' persons.

<sup>105</sup> Act on the partial change of the local self-government system, dated 23 March 1933, Journal of Laws, 1933, No. 35, Item 294.

Kulesza 1988:65)<sup>106</sup>. As traditionally the Polish concept of local self-governance is based on a community residing in a *gmina*, in 1933 this community was given the right to self-govern as a unit of administrative territorial division which was set apart from the state administration. The Act identified rural and urban *gminas* (1<sup>st</sup> tier)<sup>107</sup> and poviats (2<sup>nd</sup> tier)<sup>108</sup> as self-governing local government levels with legislative (council) and executive authority (managing board)<sup>109</sup>. Solutions accepted defined limits on local government autonomy<sup>110</sup> and limitations of state authorities' control over local self-government (cf. Pokładecki 1996:22, Kulesza 1988:66-67).

The interwar debate highlights the main concerns about designing a territorial structure of a modern democratic state which were to have an impact on the design of Polish local government after 1989. The big questions in the 1930s were how to unify the country and how autonomous should local government be. However, in essence, the debate before and after passing the 1933 Act on Local Self-Government centred on the difference between what today is called decentralisation and democratisation. Decentralisation is usually understood as the shift of power from the central state administration towards other kinds of governance, i.e. it is about splitting competences. Democratisation focuses upon the sharing of governance. “‘Decentralisation’ gives guidance on *where* in essence decision-making takes place, ‘governance’ deals with *how* the process of decision-making is organised.” (Binder, Slits, Stoquart, Muller and Schubert 2007:16). In Poland, in 1928, T. Bigo (quoted by Dolnicki 2009:38) argued that decentralisation is a wider concept than local self-government, whereas Panejko, writing in 1934, argued that self-government was to be understood as “the decentralised state administration, the operations of which are defined in the legislation and performed by local bodies, hierarchically independent from

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<sup>106</sup> “The legislation of 1933 unified the structure of local self-government in towns, rural communes and, at the higher level, of districts associations of towns and rural communes.” (Kulesza 1988:65).

<sup>107</sup> There were elected local councils in towns and rural areas, with their executive bodies (boards), the towns having mayors (or presidents) and the rural communes having leaders.

<sup>108</sup> At the *poviat* level elections to councils were indirect: the members of these councils were representatives of the local councils. Appointments to the *poviat* executive board was made on a political basis.

<sup>109</sup> Poland had state administration at the levels of voivodships and *poviats* led by Voivod and Staroste respectively. They were accountable to central government. Staroste was also the chairman of the (elected) executive board of the *poviat* self-government. There was no state administration in towns and rural *gminas* but the elected mayors and leaders of rural *gminas* were supervised by Starostes. “[...] local administration in Poland before the Second World War was dualistic: there were two overlapping structures – the state administrations and local self-government. (Kulesza 1988:66).

<sup>110</sup> In the result of The May Coup d’Etat (*Przewrót majowy*) in 1926 carried out in Poland by Marshal Józef Piłsudski and forthcoming dictatorship of Piłsudski till 1935 the process of rebuilding of local government in Poland were disturbed and slowed down. “The 1933 legislation limited greatly the independence of the communes; in Poland since 1926 a trend to an authoritarian political regime could be observed.” (Kulesza 1988:67).

other bodies and self-reliant within the limits defined by the legislation and by the general legal order” (Panejko 1934:98, trans. OM). In 1936 Jaroszyński argued that “beyond the state there is no place for self-government as beyond the state there are no public tasks. However, within the state itself, within its organisational framework, there is a place for self-government and this place is very prominent. Indeed self-government has had to evolve and has become an organ of the state” (Jaroszyński 1936:103, trans. OM). In short the debate focused on the degree of local autonomy and its appropriate limitations.

In 1989 the division of responsibilities between the elected council and administrative officials<sup>111</sup> and the issue of the actual authority of the local council had become crucial. The democratic concept of self-government was reintroduced at a very early stage of Poland’s transformation. In 1989 societal support for Solidarity and democratisation was widespread. Local communities both gave overwhelming support to the Solidarity candidates and disapproved of the old apparatchiks (Kotulski 2002:47; also Pokładecki 1996:58-65). As Regulski (2003:208) argues, the processes in the area of politics and citizens’ behaviour pre-determined the existence of political will and social consent for reforms. At the same time, the objective of the reforms was territorial pluralism, “which means that power is dispersed. [...] it prevents all the decision-making power in a country residing in one location and, instead, power is spread between socially different decision-making centres.” (Mellors and Coppethwaite 1987:3). Reformers wanted to empower local government (1<sup>st</sup> tier) and make it accountable to the local community. In 1989 Solidarity won the elections and the newly established Senate (higher chamber of the Parliament)<sup>112</sup> immediately started working on local government reform. Decentralisation of the administrative structure was judged essential for dismantling the communist system (Regulska 1998:114)<sup>113</sup>.

Decentralising the state administration needs to distinguish between issues that are of more national and those of more local interest (Dolnicki 2006:20). In Poland local government is not state administration. “[Local] Self-government has been designed to perform public administration tasks in defined domains and scope.” (Dolnicki 2009:22, trans. O.M.; cf. Nowacka 2010). The principle of subsidiarity, considered to be one of the foundations of a

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<sup>111</sup> The interwar debate about local self-government’s autonomy was valid in the Polish context.

<sup>112</sup> In the newly established Senate (higher chamber of the Parliament), all Senators but one were of the Solidarity movement (Hunter and Ryan 2009:33).

<sup>113</sup> The fact that the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act was voted for very shortly after the dissolution (29.01.1990) of the Polish Communist Party underlines how important the issues of self-governance were for Poland after 1989.

democratic system, is part of the preamble to the *Polish Constitution of 1997* which read that the state should be subsidiary to all institutions and organisations active in the state territory and serving its citizens. It states that Poland is a unitary decentralised state in which local self-government is responsible for ensuring decentralisation of public authority. It is based on historical traditions and public opinion (compare Kowalczyk 2000:222; Gilowska, Ploskonka, Prutis, Stec and Wysocka 1999:5; Yoder 2003:275). In essence, the subsidiarity principle refers to the devolution of power. "It argues that what can be efficiently performed by a smaller unit should never be delegated to a larger unit." (Dolnicki 2006:25 quoting Saint-Ouen 1991, trans. OM; see also Wójcik 1999:26). The emphasis on the principle of subsidiarity is "an attempt at defining the area of independence and self sufficiency of a citizen, a group and small and bigger communities in various domains within the state system." (Dolnicki 2006:23, trans. OM). In this context is appropriate to quote Kjellberg (1995):

If one looks more closely at the value of local autonomy or municipal freedom, it also appears that, irrespective of legal doctrines, it has changed content over time. The change might be described as a shift from a concept of freedom from something - that is, communities and districts free from interference by central civil servants - to a question of freedom to do something - that is, to take actions in order to solve communal problems. Hence, from originally being negatively defined, local autonomy became an instrument for the realization of communal interests, as well as a means to implement other values. (Kjellberg 1995:43)

In practice territorial pluralism respects the relative independence of local government from the (central) state. This follows from legal regulations that clearly define the situations in which the possible intervention of the state administration (higher level authority) into activities of local governments is recognised (*cf.* Dolnicki 2006:20). Dolnicki (2006:19) writes that the local actors involved in self-governance in Poland are the local community, which functions as a territorial self-governing union that is the *gmina*, which can be viewed as a territorial corporation<sup>114</sup>. This union or corporation is granted the status of the main local governance actor by the state in order to implement the tasks of the state. Its independence reflects the recognition of particular local interests and includes provisions for exercising the freedom to protect and satisfy such interests. The independence is regulated by national law which limits the autonomy of local government, i.e. its competencies (*cf.* Dolnicki 2009:21).

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<sup>114</sup> Compare e.g. Welsh Local Government Association, <http://www.wlga.gov.uk/english/in-local-authorities/>, accessed 15.06.2010.



The role of local government tends to be seen as finding “the balance between economic and environmental needs for the prosperity and spiritual (in its broadest sense) well being of the public by whom it is elected or appointed.” (Garbutt 1984:107). This role can be considered in terms of relations between local self-government and the state (decentralisation of competences) and the ‘local self-government – society’ relations. In general, central governments are perceived as ‘distant’. “Local governments are viewed as critical to the evolution of a democratic state because they are the closest to the people and they are the level of government with which citizens have the most contact. If they do not work well, then citizens lose faith in the democratic system.” (Thurmaier 1994:84). Thus, those who argue for decentralisation “usually cite improved and closer relationships between citizens and local authorities. Eastern and Central European countries have been no exception to this rule.” (Swianiewicz 2001a:20). Fuks (1999:19-27) expands the issue of the position of local government drawing attention to the issue of securing self-government against any illegal interference into its activities on the part of state administrative organs. Thus self-government should be autonomous from the state, and its autonomy regulated by (national) law.

Relations between central and local authorities are a reflection of the political situation. They are the interface where the power showdown takes place and decisions which change the competencies of authorities are the results of confrontations. The power showdown is to win competencies. (Regulski 2000:379) [trans. OM]

Regulski (2000:379) observed that in Poland in 1990-1997 both local and central authorities were involved in designing and improving national legislature. Local *gmina* government wanted to have their responsibilities expanded. In fact central government has frequently sought to pass matters difficult to deal with ‘downwards’ to local government (see chapter 5, section 5.1). As a consequence, national law was changed several times to confirm or enhance democratic practices and competencies (autonomy) of the local *gmina* government. The process of decentralisation and democratisation in Poland has been complex and long (see sections 3.3 and 3.4).

## **Local government and the community**

In multi-level governance answers to questions about the autonomy of sub-national actors', the inclusion of citizens and the quality of service delivery, all precondition how local government is structured. As Blok (2006:179) observes limitations on local self-government in general increase centralisation and bureaucracy and simultaneously weaken the creativity of a local community whereas their reduction may lead to giving space for particular local interests and lead to a dangerous dissociation/disintegration of civil society. This points to the need of searching for a healthy balance in local democracy.

Currently researchers on local government agree that there is a minimum of three values that are essential to local government in a democratic state: *autonomy* (liberty), *participation*, and *effectiveness*. They are key prerogatives of decentralisation and democratisation Swianiewicz (2001a) describes the values of decentralisation/devolution (*cf.* also Sharpe 1970, Kjellberg 1995) as follows:

“Liberty” (autonomy) meaning in this case the existence of local government to protect from concentration of political power in one center, and allows for making different political choices in different localities;

“Participation” (democracy)—meaning that the existence of local governments allowing for wider inclusion of citizens in self-governance, and,

“Effectiveness”—meaning the ability of local governments to deliver various services more effectively. (Swianiewicz 2001a:20-21)

Democratic participation, as Kjellberg (1995:43) claims, is what local self-government embodies in addition to autonomy. With the recognition of the role civil society plays in democratic societies, the effectiveness of local government has been discussed in terms of local government's responsiveness to local residents' needs (e.g. Sharpe 1970, Kjellberg 1995, Swianiewicz 2001a, Mellors and Coppethwaite 1987). Blok (2006:181) commenting on the situation of Polish reformers in 1989 underlines that, while designing the decentralisation of the communist system, it was difficult to demonstrate convincingly that a local government could do something better, more efficiently, economically and professionally. This points to common concerns about the effectiveness of local government. Indeed the issues of the effectiveness and accountability of local government dominate modern debates on self-governance and the quality of democracy. However accountability is also related to responsiveness. According to Mellors and Coppethwaite:

The qualities of pluralism; participation and responsiveness are therefore the essence of local government and the justification for its existence and our interest in its

health. Without these qualities the provision of services at the local level would be an administrative activity rather than a political one – local administration rather than local government. (Mellors and Coppethwaite 1987:4).

This means that the reasons for the existence of sub-national governments is usually analysed in terms of their efficiency but their impact on the quality of democracy, needs to be considered as well.

Within liberal democracies the term ‘democracy’ refers to “a system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their elected representatives” (Reisinger 1997: 46 after Schmitter and Karl 1991:76). Indeed, the necessities of ‘healthy’ representative democracy at the local level e.g. free elections and a well established elected network of local authorities are the basics of a democratic system<sup>115</sup>. In Poland local governments are chosen in local elections by those who participate in the elections (*cf.* Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government 1990). Ekiert, Kubik and Vachudowa (2007:15) state that “In the post-communist context, the countries that adopted a parliamentary system and proportional representation and delegated significant authority to the local level and to independent regulatory institutions have been more successful in consolidating democracy”.

The rationale for representative democracy is largely built on the impracticalities of direct (participatory) democracy (*cf.* Robertson 2002:148-149, 377 and Kuciński 2005:180). Representative democracy releases the citizens from time-consuming direct involvement in politics and this may be seen as its advantage. In reality, interest in local elections is lower than in national elections and the accountability issue is relevant to assessing the role of local government. Although the authorities are held accountable for their actions by citizens, they may be serving not only the public good but also on occasions the interests of specific lobbying groups. Also, the needs of local communities can change over time. Participatory democracy is able to provide a check on the excesses of representative democracy. Devas and Delay (2006) emphasise that those who participate in discussions about local issues are more likely to demand accountability. It is in the interest of local authorities to know what problems trouble the community, what needs and expectations

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<sup>115</sup> “In one sense local democracy is only national democracy translated to the local level with modifications necessitated by the different scale of operations, the different context and its subordinate position.” (Stanyer 1976:265).

the community has, and thus it is in the interest of authorities to encourage civil society to take part in decision-making processes and in the preparation of local legal regulations or Acts. An authorities' *accountability* is a recurring issue as recognition of its importance grows with citizens' increased participation in civil society and political parties have an interest in winning the next elections (cf. John 2001:34; Bennett 1997:1).

In democracies the electoral process may help to ensure the representation of interests of different citizens and social groups (cf. Font 2002); periodic elections are seen as the core mechanism of citizen participation and authorities' accountability (Devas and Delay 2006). A more sociological interpretation of representativeness is that collectively the voters represent a microcosm of the electorate that elected representatives should listen and answer to. The reality, however, is not so straight forward- those more (or less) likely to vote may come from particular social classes or groups. Added to this:

local elections are often dominated by personalities, ethnic loyalties and clientelistic relationships, and may effectively exclude significant sections of the population. There is as well an issue that not always the best representative is elected, which is due to several factors like amount of money for the political campaign, access to media during campaign or the voting system adopted in a given country. (Devas and Delay 2006:684)

Whether these problems trouble local democracy in Poznań will be investigated in chapter 5, section 5.4.

### **The attributes of the 'healthy' local democracy**

Local government is rooted in the ideals of local democracy (Hollis, Ham and Amber 1992, Mellors and Copperthwaite 1987). In reality, the part played by local government plays varies because of the different political systems in which they are rooted (Stanyer 1979). Within Europe ideas of local government differ significantly between countries where Swianiewicz (2001a), basing himself on his arguments developed earlier by Goldsmith (1996), suggests that local government in southern European countries differs from its counterparts in northern Europe – that whereas in the former local government is more closely associated with political localism, in northern Europe effectiveness, the ideals of equality and justice and the relationships between central and local government are more significant. In the CEE Swianiewicz argued that in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and to a lesser extent in Hungary, local government reform emphasised the territorial and localist ideals, whereas in Poland it has been assumed that the corporate approach to local self-government in which *effectiveness* and *efficiency* are highly valued is decisive for the

quality of life of local residents and standards of communal and societal services delivery (cf. Kotulski 2002:47)<sup>116</sup>.

Effective provision of services emphasises the administrative sense of local self-government (cf. Leoński 2002:5). This is a narrow understanding of local self-government. Miller, Dickson and Stoker (2000) review local government and conclude that the traditional image is that of a system of all-purposes elected councils (Miller, Dickson and Stoker 2000:85). In the modern context they prefer to use the term ‘local governance’ rather than ‘local government’ (Miller, Dickson and Stoker 2000:2). By local governance they mean “the commissioning, organization and control of services such as health, education, policing, infrastructure and economic development within localities” (Miller, Dickson and Stoker 2000:1). The main difference between the traditional local government and the local governance concepts is that local governance emphasises execution of policies which are to improve service delivery locally emphasising the role of partnerships. It needs to be underlined that the concept of local governance focuses on the well-being of local communities and thus the provision of services acquires a wider meaning. Mellors and Copperthwaite (1987:1) in their book *Local Government in the Community* quote the Bains Report of 1972, in which it is stated that local government is not limited to the stated by law provision of services to the local community. “It has within its preview the overall economic, cultural and physical well-being of that community, and for this reason its decisions impinge with increasing frequency upon the individual lives of its citizens.” (Mellors and Copperthwaite 1987:1, quoting from the Bains Report, 1972). Equally Garbutt (1984:107) in his definition of local government puts stress on the issue of the well-being of local communities.<sup>117</sup> In densely populated urban areas the improvement of

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<sup>116</sup> In 1993 Czechoslovakia was divided into two independent countries. The re-emergence of Slovakia contributed to its high concern with autonomy. Swianiewicz’s own comparative research (see table below) confirms those observations with effectiveness being valued highest in Poland.

Goals of Local Government as seen by Local Mayors [Percent of selections as one of the two the most important]

	All countries (%)	Czech Republic (%)	Poland (%)	Slovakia (%)
Democracy	61.3	67.9	54.3	71.7
Autonomy	67.5	60.6	61.5	89.1
Effectiveness	71.2	71.4	84.2	49.2

Source: Swianiewicz (2001a:24): based on 1997 LDI project survey

<sup>117</sup> Dolnicki emphasises that “Local interests frequently differ from national interests but this cannot be taken to mean that the interest of a local community is of lesser importance.” (Dolnicki 2006:20, trans O.M.).

living standards and quality of services is a major concern of local government. In Sharpe's (1970) words:

There is clearly a very powerful link between urbanism and local government; the great bulk of the activities of most local government systems are closely associated with providing common services for people living in close proximity to one another who could not provide these services for themselves individually. (Sharpe 1970:153)

As it was observed above, evaluations of local government performance tend to be based on the government's *effectiveness* (cf. Swianiewicz 2002b) which includes improving the quality of public life through responsive public service delivery. *Effectiveness* of local government is assessed by the residents mainly upon the actions of local government which have a direct influence on their lives (service delivery). In a big municipality the interests of sub-local communities need to have their advocates as well. This points to the issue of connectedness between local authorities and their local communities and the issue of local government performance. It follows that improvement of representative democracy can be achieved by the improvement of the authorities' responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability. Without these qualities the role of local government is indeed reduced to local administration. (These qualities are judged by local residents. In my case study of the City of Poznań residents' evaluation of the performance and qualities of local government is analysed in chapter 5.)

For a democracy to be healthy, the actual practices of local authorities should facilitate an increasing involvement of local residents in decision-making processes. Participatory democracy, in a complementary but also possibly conflictual relationship to representative democracy, has the potential to shape both the composition of elected institutions and the policies of local authorities. In a healthy democracy it is essential that local government offers the possibility of hearing different views, as effective communication between the authorities and citizens is important (cf. Sakowicz 2002:5). This secures the right and space for exercising civil liberties including the presentation of particular interests (Pietrzko 1999:113). The exercise of civil liberties has an impact on the decision-making system and facilitates control of the authorities. Fuks (1999:19-27) underlines the issue of the societal authenticity of self-governance where the local community identifies itself with their self-government and actively takes part in its undertakings. Fuks argues that societal authenticity is needed to transform local government into local governance. In local democracy residents' control over the authorities results in the residents' actual evaluation of the authorities' *accountability* (Soós 2001:202). Thus the local community should be the

subject of all activities of its self-government<sup>118</sup>. It follows that local government's closeness to local community should be of concern to legislators who need to design law that include widening community participation in decision-making on local developments (inclusive citizenship). This also implies that authorities have to be pro-active and responsive between elections to the residents' concerns and act in their best interests (compare e.g. Przeworski, Stokes and Manin 1999, Urbinati 2006, Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi 2000, Rose-Ackerman 2005). Authorities can increase participatory democracy e.g. by mobilising local residents to participate in consultations and debates. This may have an effect on electoral power, i.e. casting ballots, which can be seen as a practical evaluation of the performance of government.

The purposes of local direct democracy can be defined more precisely as providing the conduit for presenting alternative opinions. As such it becomes integral part of civil liberties (Pietrzko 1999:113). Equally, it contributes to the effectiveness of the decision-making system. Healthy participatory democracy ideally helps makes local institutions of representative democracy much more responsive and accountable and, at the same time, its exercise empowers local communities. *Responsiveness* can be defined as the congruence between popular preferences and the actual policies of local government. Increased participation enhances the responsiveness of authorities and improves public discourse. In the context of the UK local government the Widdicombe Report quoted in Mellor and Copperthwaite (1987:3) defines responsiveness as the "sensitivity to local need" and "the opportunity to initiate and pioneer in response to particular local circumstances and ideas". Furthermore, it sees responsiveness as the ability to co-ordinate responses to local multifaceted issues. Polish local government created as the result of post-1989 decentralisation reforms "was designed to operate in a similar way to local authorities in Western democracies" (Young and Kaczmarek 2000:226), therefore the establishment of the new centre-local relations, included increasing the responsiveness of government to the needs of localities (Young and Kaczmarek 2000:225 after Regulska 1997a). Responsiveness can be improved by political participation enhancing vertical accountability (Soós 2001). It is not entirely clear what local authorities should do to qualify as being responsive. However, there is anticipation about the citizens' ability to influence the processes and institutions at the authority level and vice versa. I would claim

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<sup>118</sup> According to Fuks (1999) if the societal authenticity is missing, it is only the bodies of the self-government that act and self-governance is absent in the actual societal life.

that a healthy local democracy is oriented towards improvement of its practices: it has self-improving and self-reinforcing qualities.

The concept of local democracy changes in parallel with broader societal changes. In the present context, the varied responsibilities of local governments as well as the size of the population living in administrative units make it almost impossible to practise the institution of direct democracy in its original form. From the direct form, in which people participated directly in decisions important to them, democracy evolved to be representative as the responsibilities of local government multiplied. However, there is still a place for some elements of direct local democracy in a representative system of democracy. For local authorities and local communities the exercising of local democracy is a school of civil participation and cooperation in sharing responsibility in governing the area they live in and for which they are responsible. In this sense local democracy is a joint venture in which local authorities and citizens are not in 'opposition' to one another but should operate collaboratively for the well-being of the community. Direct local democracy is practiced on a local common field and should integrate all players to attain common goals. However, the role of local democracy should not be idealised as it is important to remember that individuals and pressure groups have private interests which might conflict with the common good. Ideally, local democracy gives local communities and individual citizens a promise that their opinions will be heard during the decision making process. Although it may seem that the system of local democracy gives rights only to citizens, it also legitimised local authorities the decisions of which should be respected. Consequently, local direct democracy allows for the existence of formal and informal opposition and institutionalises the activities of the opposition. Local communities may support or oppose the activities of local authorities. Members of local authorities may seek support for their ideas in local communities. It can be described as a constant process of compromising for the purpose of achieving what is considered best for the well-being of the *whole* community. A balance has to be achieved between objectives of members of local communities and objectives of local representative institutions. Solutions should be consulted and decisions negotiated. By taking an active part in the decision-making processes residents become involved in policy-making and learn to be responsible and active members of the community at large. Therefore, in the process of improving representative and participatory democracy the connectedness of councillors with the residents on various understandings of citizens' collective actions is important (compare Bucek and Smith 2000, Kersting and Vetter 2003). Consequently local



government's accountability, effectiveness and responsiveness will be investigated on the example of Poznań local and sub-local self-governments' performance in chapter 5.

### **3.3. Polish reforms: the place and position of local government**

In CEE the reforms which gave local government its autonomy introduced a new division of power and were an essential part of democratisation processes (*cf.* Swianiewicz 2001a, Regulski 2000). As argued above, in Poland the main issue in decentralisation centred on local government reforms (e.g. Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska 2002, Yoder 2003, Regulski 2003). A comprehensive review of Polish reforms is necessary to present the process of building legal bases for the new democratic system. My presentation and discussion of reforms draws attention to reformers' recognition of the tradition of the *gmina* and their efforts to empower local government and make it accountable to local communities. (Some details and outcomes of the reforms are discussed further in 3.4 below.)

The Constitutional Reform of the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 1990<sup>119</sup> was the first step. It amended the 1952 Constitution<sup>120</sup> by warranting local governments' a share in 'power' and replacing the regulations on local National Councils with new Articles (43-47) on local self-government. This Constitutional Reform and the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act<sup>121</sup> of the same date, had reborn self-government in Poland. In 1990, when the Polish Senate put forward the *Act on Gmina Local Self-Government*, it substantiated the Act by saying that as part of the state administration local self-government should not be viewed as the 'fourth power' (unlike e.g. in the Belgian Constitution of 1831<sup>122</sup>). Self-government:

has been incorporated into the state structures as a body making decisions of local relevance and not as a body countering [...] the state administration. By law, self-government is complementary to state administration in performing public administration tasks. (Stępień 1991:91, trans. OM)<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup> Act on The Constitutional Reform, dated 8 March, Journal of Laws, 1990, No. 29, Item 171.

<sup>120</sup> The Constitution of the People's Republic of Poland, dated 22 July 1952, Journal of Laws, 1952, No. 33, Item 232.

<sup>121</sup> Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government (*op. cit.*)

<sup>122</sup> In the Belgian Constitution of 1831 the commune's independence of the state and the commune's self-government (the 4th power within the state) were recognised favouring the natural approach (Pokładecki 1996:13).

<sup>123</sup> Excerpt from the substantiation for the Senate's project of the Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government, Stępień (1991).

This was a new beginning for *gminas*. Kulesza (2002:3-4) argues that local government reforms were essential as “any reform of the centre in a highly centralised system would not bring about any qualitative change but would only strengthen centralisation”. That is why it was essential to start from democratising the lowest tier, i.e. *gmina*.

The issue of the degree of autonomy local government should enjoy combined with fiscal decentralisation and to some extent with regulatory decentralisation (Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi 2008:4). According to Peteri (2003:23, *cf.* Stanek 2003), devolution of control over property should be part of a general decentralisation strategy as property-related decisions are critical to the transition to democracy. This is so because property ownership is a question of economic power and has long-term economic implications. Article 5 of the *Gmina Local Self-Government Act* is solely devoted to *gmina*’s property. The issue of reinstituting *gmina*’s property<sup>124</sup> was part of fiscal decentralisation. Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi (2008) emphasise the issue of fiscal decentralisation:

Fiscal decentralization involves a transfer of expenditure responsibilities to lower-level local governments, financed by a combination of own and other sources of revenues, including transfers. The manner in which responsibilities are assigned—for example, by unfunded mandates or by earmarked or tied transfers—may reduce the “effective autonomy” of the local governments. Similarly, without own-source revenue at the margin, the local governments may lack incentives for proper accountability because they might be able to leverage the federal government or pass on the consequences of their actions to other jurisdictions. (Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi 2008:4)

The most critical section of the *Gmina Local Self-Government Act* centred on the transfer of state properties to the *gminas*. It was in 1990 when the *gmina* took over a major part of the state property and was granted the status of the juristic person<sup>125</sup> (Regulski 1999, 2003; Kowalczyk 2000 and 3.4 below). *Gminas* began the process of freeing the economy by privatising enterprises, selling, transferring or leasing land and buildings, which they owned as a result of the Act. “In this way the self-government reform began important changes in the economy and became one of the main driving forces of economic transformation in Poland.” (Kulesza 2002:7).

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<sup>124</sup> In the communist system local authorities were only units of state administration. They did not have the status of juristic persons and as such had no right to possess property.

<sup>125</sup> The status of a juristic person means that the *gmina* government possesses legal capacity and can act like a company does. See e.g. EUROFOUND definition of ‘legal person’ at <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emire/GERMANY/LEGALPERSON-DE.htm>, accessed 12.09.2010.

The *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act was followed by the Act on Self-Government Employees (22.03.1990)<sup>126</sup> which was also important in many respects. It established a new professional group of local government employees distinct from the central administration<sup>127</sup>. Jerzy Regulski, underlining the importance of the rebirth of local government in Poland for Polish democracy, said that in 1990 in one day 100,000 people ceased to be state officials and became local administration officials<sup>128</sup>. This was another major step in dismantling the communist system as this Act introduced the concept of public service.

The above reforms covered political, fiscal and to some extent regulatory decentralisation, i.e. in areas recognised by Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi (2008). Decentralisation of the state system which instituted new local governments has shifted a number of rights and competencies from the central government to the local level, i.e. to local government, but foremost it focused on the accountability of autonomous – within the limits of the law - units of local government (*cf.* Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska 2002:201). New local government was made responsible for acting on its own behalf and account (*cf.* Regulski 2000:378). Since 1990 *gmina* local government has had its own administration, independent of the central administration; unlimited property rights; a separate budget from the state budget and is protected against illegal intervention from the central administration or political parties. Reforms of the 1990s were judged to be crucial to increase the stability of the young democracy on the path to its consolidation (Crawford 1997:108). Given its autonomy and decision-making freedom, local government was to be responsible for creating a local political, economic and social arena (Regulska 1998:113-114). In 1994 Poland signed the European Charter of Local Self-Government<sup>129</sup>. Already in 1994 Poland's new legislature was in accord with Article 3, item 1 of the European Charter which reads: "Local self-government denotes the right and the ability of local authorities, within the limits of law, to regulate and manage a substantial share of public affairs under their own responsibilities and in the interest of the local population."

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<sup>126</sup> Act on Self-Government Employees, dated 22 March 1990, Journal of Laws, 1990, No. 21, Item 124.

<sup>127</sup> Under communism, *gmina* employees were employees of the state.

<sup>128</sup> Sochacka (2005), Interview with Prof. Michał Kulesza, Prof. Jerzy Regulski and Dr Jerzy Stępień.

<sup>129</sup> European Charter of Local Self-Government, Strasbourg, 15 October 1985, Council of Europe, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Treaties/Html/122.htm>, accessed 26.01.2006.

The new Polish Constitution was introduced in 1997<sup>130</sup>. According to Regulski (2000:378), it strengthened local government after *gminas* and their self-governments grew stronger. Thus the 1997 Constitution acknowledged and confirmed the progress of decentralisation and democratisation. Since 1997 local self-government became rooted in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which was adopted by the National Assembly on the 2 April 1997<sup>131</sup>. Article 16 delegates public power to the local community and its local government:

1. The inhabitants of the units of basic territorial division shall form a self-governing community in accordance with law.
2. Local self-government shall participate in the exercise of public power. The substantial part of public duties which local self-government is empowered to discharge by statute shall be done in its own name and under its own responsibility.

In compliance with Article 171, item 1, of the Polish Constitution, the only criterion of admissible supervision of self-governmental administration is one related to the compliance with the Acts on public tasks (Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska 2002:201). This is in line with Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi's (2008:4) regulatory decentralisation<sup>132</sup>. Table 3.1 (below) presents the results of the devolution, i.e. the division of responsibilities among the three tiers of local government. The allocation of competencies (and tasks) is closely related to fiscal decentralisation and Article 165 of the Polish Constitution which reads:

1. Units of local self-government shall possess legal personality. They shall have rights of ownership and other property rights.

There 'legal personality' refers to juristic person.

Public tasks which are the responsibility of local government include tasks delegated or rather commissioned by the state administration and tasks that are local government's own (direct responsibility)<sup>133</sup>. Delegated tasks remain under state supervision and their delegation is either regulated by national law or results from voluntary agreements with

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<sup>130</sup> In 1992 the so called Small Constitution (*op. cit.*) was introduced because the amending (1990) of the 1952 Constitutions (*op. cit.*) did not provide for changes necessary and the work on the new Constitution was required much time.

<sup>131</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, dated 2 April, 1997, Journal of Laws, 1997, No. 78, Item 483. Version in English: <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm>, accessed 21.03.2010.

<sup>132</sup> "Regulatory decentralization does not imply an appreciable transfer of financial resources or assignments, although its effect may be considerable for citizens (such as regulation of car emissions). Pure regulatory decentralization is much less frequent than fiscal decentralization. In fact, substantial centralization of regulations has taken place, particularly in environmental, health, and even financial policies." (Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi 2008:4).

<sup>133</sup> See art. 6 and 7 in Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government (*op. cit.*).

state agencies. *Gminas* are provided with the funds necessary to perform delegated tasks. The *gminas*' own tasks focus on meeting the collective needs of communities for public services not reserved by law for other entities and authorities. The major legislative act that determines the nature of self-government bodies' revenues is The Act on Revenues of Territorial Self-Government Entities dated 13 November 2003<sup>134</sup>.

Table 3.1 Allocation of functions among tiers of local and regional self-government in Poland

<i>Gminas</i>	Poviats	Voivodships
local development plans, local physical master plans, granting building permits water supply and sewerage, waste collection and disposal, street cleaning street lighting, parks and green areas conservation, central heating, local roads, city public transportation city guards, voluntary fire brigades kindergartens and primary schools social services, such as housing benefits, services for elderly, social welfare benefits, construction of social housing, management of municipal housing local libraries, theatres, cultural institutions, civil act registration	poviats' development plans, building inspections, poviats' road network public order and security (police), civil defence secondary school education public health and sanitary services unemployment measures and fighting, care for homeless people land registry and surveying	strategic regional planning (including international economic relations and regional promotion), regional development contracts with central government regional work network water management (flood protection) some higher education facilities public health (regional hospitals) regional cultural facilities protection of the environment

Source: Author's own compilation based on parliamentary Acts and Swianiewicz and Herbst (2002:225)

It was clear to the reformers in Poland that in starting the process of decentralisation with a thorough reform of the territorial division (1990) the old *modus operandi* was to be eliminated as soon as possible and that it was essential to establish the democratic idea of self-governing at all levels of the new administrative division. Thus, a law on forms of local direct democracy had to be included in the Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government of the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 1990). The *Act* names the following forms of direct democracy: consultations (Article 5a), referenda (Article 12) and local government elections (Article 11). Critically, Article 12 of the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act of 1990 established the institution of the referendum. The reasoning was that the three political parties functioning under the communist regime had not been delegatised and it was unrealistic to expect that

<sup>134</sup> Act on Revenues of Territorial Self-Government Entities, dated 13 November 2003, Journal of Laws, 2003, No. 203, Item 1966 (consolidated text based on: Journal of Laws, 2010, No. 80, Item 526 and No. 127, Item 857.

the popular movement of Solidarity would transform itself into a strong political party. Measures were needed to secure popular control over the local political arena. The referendum option was among others designed to allow citizens to ‘correct’ their choices made in elections to local councils, i.e. the council could be dismissed (abrogated) before the end of its term (*cf.* section 3.4 below).<sup>135</sup> This was motivated by the fear that established post-communist political parties could control local councils by winning the first local elections. A year later the Act on *Gmina* Referendum<sup>136</sup> was passed (11 October 1991). Its first Article, point 1 confirmed the political motivation for introducing referenda:

*Gmina* residents express their will to solve a matter in a particular way or to abrogate the *Gmina* Council before the end of its term in a referendum. [trans. OM].

On the 17 October 1992, the role of local communities and the exercise of the institution of referendum was strengthened in the Constitutional Act on Mutual Relations between the Legislative and Administrative Authorities of the Republic of Poland and on Local Government<sup>137</sup>. Article 72, Paragraph 2.2 stated that citizens could take decisive decisions in local referenda. In the now binding Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997, Article 170 lays out the essential premise on which local referenda are founded stating that:

Members of a self-governing community may decide, by means of a referendum, matters concerning their community, including the dismissal of an organ of local government established by direct election. The principles of and procedures for conducting a local referendum shall be specified by statute<sup>138</sup>.

A referendum may concern any issue<sup>139</sup>. The 1997 Constitution refers to the Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government of 1990 and the Act on *Gmina* Referendum of 1991. Since the year 2000, the Act on Local Referendum (2000)<sup>140</sup> has become an important reference for the

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<sup>135</sup> A referendum had to be held also on issues of voluntary taxation for public purposes and the law has also authorized referenda on any other matter important to the *gmina*. This was expanded in the Act on *Gmina* Referendum.

<sup>136</sup> Act on *Gmina* Referendum, dated 11 October 1991, Journal of Laws, 1991, No. 110, Item 473. See also the consolidated text dated 14 May 1996, Journal of Laws, 1996, No. 84, Item 386.

<sup>137</sup> Constitutional Act on Mutual Relations between the Legislative and Administrative Authorities of the Republic of Poland and on Local Government. Journal of Laws, 1992, No. 84, Item 426. This Act is also referred to as Small Constitutions [*Mała Konstytucja*].

<sup>138</sup> Quoted from the official English version, <http://www.sejm.gov.pl/prawo/konst/angielski/kon1.htm>, accessed 21.03.2010. The meaning of the last sentence is: Rules and procedures of a local referendum are set by the law. The last word in the Polish original is *ustawa* which means Act.

<sup>139</sup> For example consultations: on territorial issues (change of a *gmina* name, change of *gmina* boundaries), consultations on ecological issues (localisation of waste dump), location of a gymnasium (junior secondary school), enlargement of a National Park, construction of a cell phone tower, future of a local hospital; referenda: on self-taxation (local medical care, wastes disposal); on abrogation of local authorities.

<sup>140</sup> Act on Local Referendum, dated 15 September 2000, Journal of Laws, 2000, No. 88, Item 985.

Constitution, clarifying the distinction between two kinds of referenda – obligatory and optional (facultative, *cf.* section 3.4)<sup>141</sup> – within the Polish legal system. The first include referenda on proposed self-taxation of local communities for public objectives, abrogation of the council and abrogation of mayors before the end of their term [*wójt* in case of rural *gminas*, *burmistrz* in case of urban *gminas* and *prezydent* of a city]<sup>142</sup>. It was part of the idea of strengthening Polish democracy that at the local level people would start to take responsibility and govern their own local area, eliminating the communist order and logic from their lives by introducing changes to their own benefit.

Table 3.2 General characteristics of Polish voivodships

Voivodship	Poviats	Municipalities with powiat status	<i>Gminas</i>	Cities
Dolnośląskie	26	3	169	91
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	19	4	144	52
Lubelskie	20	4	213	41
Lubuskie	12	2	83	42
Łódzkie	21	3	177	42
Małopolskie	19	3	182	55
Mazowieckie	37	5	314	85
Opolskie	11	1	71	35
Podkarpackie	21	4	159	45
Podlaskie	14	3	118	36
Pomorskie	16	4	123	42
Śląskie	17	19	167	71
Świętokrzyskie	13	1	102	30
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	19	2	116	49
Wielkopolskie	31	4	226	109
Zachodniopomorskie	18	3	114	62
<b>Poland</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>2478</b>	<b>887</b>

Source: Główny Urząd Statystyczny (GUS) [Central Statistical Office] ‘Dane społeczno-gospodarcze 2005’ [Socio-economic data 2005], [http://www.stat.gov.pl/dane\\_spolgosp/ludnosc/powierz\\_teryt/2005/index.htm](http://www.stat.gov.pl/dane_spolgosp/ludnosc/powierz_teryt/2005/index.htm), accessed 15.11.2005.

Though Polish experts who designed the reforms took a different path than that prevailing in West European traditions and chose to start the transformation processes from ‘below’

<sup>141</sup> See section 3.4

<sup>142</sup> “In the parliamentary elections of 1990, shortly after the downfall of the communist state, political mobilisation gelled around the communist bloc and Solidarity. Considerable uncertainties existed around how the political arena would develop at the national and local level. Time was needed for new political parties to emerge and, at the local level, for political leadership and elites to emerge. The uncertainties implied the need to create a democratic possibility of revising the results of local government elections should local political circumstances fail to match local needs and expectations. The option to hold a local referendum to abrogate a local authority was introduced as a kind of safety measure enabling the power of the citizen voter over the elected authority and creating the conditions for a second chance for emerging parties and leaders to consolidate at a local level.” (Mausch-Dębowska forthcoming 2011).

by strengthening the young democracy at the local level, they based their reforms on experiences of Western democracies. Their logic had its roots in their understanding of democracy based on two essential international documents: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights<sup>143</sup> and the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights reads that each citizen has the right to take part in managing public matters.

Figure 3.2 Administrative division of Poland from 1999. Voivodships with capital cities.



Source: Mischczuk (2003:161)

Polish devolution strengthened the voivodships (3<sup>rd</sup> tier, NUTS 2) by reducing their number and increasing their population size and reintroduced the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier, i.e. *powiat*

<sup>143</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI), 16 December 1966, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/ccpr.htm>, accessed 12.03.2009.



(NUTS 4)<sup>144</sup>. Parliamentary Acts<sup>145</sup> establishing local government on the level of poviats (2<sup>nd</sup> tier)<sup>146</sup> and voivodships (3<sup>rd</sup> tier)<sup>147</sup> were passed on 5 June 1998.<sup>148</sup> The Acts came into force on the 1 January 1999 and were preceded with the Act of 24 July 1998 introducing a three tier system of local government in Poland<sup>149</sup> (see Table 3.2). In 1999 an objective was to introduce bigger administrative units which would be effective economically. The number of voivodships was reduced from 49 to 16 (see Figure 3.2). In terms of their area, population and economic and political potential they function as regions (*cf.* Miszczuk 2003). This increased their potential to undertake bigger projects in sharp contrast with the communist government policy. The average area of a voivodship is 19,543 km<sup>2</sup> and the average population is 2,416,700. Voivodships are responsible for the creation of a regional strategy for broadly understood development.<sup>150</sup> It should be emphasised that voivodship with a long historical tradition and strong local identity like Mazowieckie (Mazovia), Śląskie (Upper Silesia), Dolnośląskie (Lower Silesia), Wielkopolskie (Greater Poland), and Małopolskie (Lesser Poland) have been given an opportunity to promote and strengthen their respective local identity which is essential for the idea of civil society. Other new voivodships without historical traditions have started to consolidate their identity. Such

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<sup>144</sup> See: Eurostat, 'The division into NUTS in different EU member states', [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts\\_nomenclature/correspondence\\_tables/national\\_structures\\_eu](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/nuts_nomenclature/correspondence_tables/national_structures_eu), accessed 15.09.2010. For the most recent regulation on coding NUTS in Poland see: Regulation of the Council of Ministers on the Introduction of the Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS), Journal of Laws, 2007, No. 214, Item 1573.

<sup>145</sup> On the controversies and political debates around the implementation of this Act see e.g. Young and Kaczmarek 2000, Miszczuk 2003, Regulska 1997b.

<sup>146</sup> Act on Voivodship Local Self-Government, dated 5 June 1998, Journal of Laws, 1998, No. 91, Item 576.

<sup>147</sup> Act on Poviats Local Self-Government, dated 5 June 1998, Journal of Laws, 1998, No. 91, Item 578.

<sup>148</sup> "The confused and still centralistic system of regional policy formulation and delivery did not meet EU requirements. The demands of chapter 21 of the *acquis*, referring to the creation of regional administrative units meeting the NUTS criteria, the development of regional institutional capacity and the embedding of the partnership principle were clearly not being fulfilled. The absence of units of self-governance at the regional level was also contrary to the principle of decentralisation. Along with these shortcomings, weaknesses in Poland's administration of vital EU structural funds such as PHARE that are designed to foster strong, democratic units of local and regional government were noted by the European Commission in its initial assessments of Poland's application for EU membership. [...] In fact, in May 1998 bureaucratic confusion and wrangling over the distribution of EU aid resulted in the European Commission's rejection of a series of Polish PHARE grant applications worth €34 million on the grounds of poor preparation. [...] As a result, Commission influence on the preparation of the new round of regional reforms was apparent." (Ferry 2003:1101).

<sup>149</sup> Act on the Establishment of the Basic Three-Tier Territorial Division of the State, dated 24 July 1998, Journal of Laws, 1998, No. 96, Item 603.

<sup>150</sup> The voivodship government is a legislative body (elected Voivodship Assembly led by Voivodship Marshal) which drafts a development strategy of the voivodship, which includes: cultivation of Polishness and development of national, civic and cultural consciousness; stimulation of economic activity; enhancement of competition and innovation in the voivodship economy; preservation of cultural and natural environment; structure and preservation of spatial order. Voivod is the executive representative of the central government.

consolidation is not unproblematic and it has been incorporated into voivodships' development strategies supported by the Central Government<sup>151</sup> (on the issue of regional identities see e.g. Zarycki and Tucholska 2004, Zarycki 2008).

The implementation of the second tier of local government in Poland, i.e. *powiat*, was seen as the introduction of the missing link. The *poviats* are responsible for those services in the public sector the scope of which is too large for a *gmina*<sup>152</sup>. The introduction of the *powiat* tier is highly relevant to the discussion of the status of large municipalities like Poznań. After changes completed in 2003, the 65 largest cities have the status of urban *poviats* (*powiat grodzki*, 2<sup>nd</sup> tier). Large municipalities have been granted the *powiat* status to more efficiently take care of the needs of local residents whose number much exceeds the average population number of Polish *gminas* which is 20,000. Large municipalities have been given more tasks and accordingly greater financial resources from the central government. In effect they are dual entities the tasks of which include those of a *gmina* and a *powiat*. In the late 1990s this duality led to disputes on whether urban *poviats* were 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> tier units (cf. Dolnicki 2006:123). The dispute was halted with the Act Amending Acts on Local Governments of *Gmina*, *Powiat*, *Voivodship*, on Central Government Administration in *Voivodships*, and Amending Other Related Acts passed on 11 April 2001<sup>153</sup>. Article 2.41 explains that an urban *powiat* is a *gmina* responsible for tasks delegated to the *powiat* in the Act on the Establishment of the Basic Three-Tier Territorial Division of the State<sup>154</sup> (1998) but otherwise the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act (1990) applies to it (cf. Dolnicki 2006:125-126).

Amendments of parliamentary Acts should be treated as outcomes of an ongoing learning experience. The devolution has profoundly changed the tiers' competencies as:

Within the structure of local authorities there is no hierarchical dependence: a *powiat* is not a superior unit to a *gmina*, nor is a self-governmental voivodeship superior to *poviats*. The separation of the tasks of a *gmina*, *powiat*, and a voivodeship means that those communities work independently of each other; they can cooperate by entering into all kinds of agreements entrusting to each other specified public tasks,

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<sup>151</sup> For example usually successful attempts at founding universities in capital cities of new voivodships and the introduction of 'regional education' programmes to schools. (Ciczowska-Giedziun 2005).

<sup>152</sup> For example development of a landfill serving neighbouring *gminas*.

<sup>153</sup> Act Amending Act on Local Governments of *Gmina*, *Powiat*, *Voivodship*, on Central Government Administration in *Voivodships*, and Amending Other Related Acts, dated 11 April 2001, Journal of Laws, 2001, No. 45, Item 497 with subsequent changes.

<sup>154</sup> Act on the Establishment of the Basic Three-Tier Territorial Division of the State (*op. cit.*).

or they can establish unions to implement their tasks. (Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska 2002: 200)

In 2002 direct elections<sup>155</sup> for mayors (*burmistrz* - the mayor of an urban *gmina*, *prezydent miasta* – the mayor of a major city) and rural *gmina* leaders (*wójt*) were introduced.<sup>156</sup> This changed the rules of the game in local politics. Prior to this Act, the local council was the collegiate legislative and executive authority. The Act gave executive power to mayors (and rural leaders) making them personally responsible for executing decisions taken by the Council and for supervising the work of the *gmina* administration officials<sup>157</sup>. This was to facilitate more efficient management of the *gmina* and to institute a strong executive authority which could counterbalance the political lobbying of councillors. Directly elected mayors enjoy now a stronger mandate, are heads of their offices, i.e. Town/City Hall officials, supervise major municipal service providers, take decisions on particular (individual) issues raised by local residents in accordance with public administration laws and are the executive bodies of the municipality (cf. Dolnicki 2009:140). Abrogation of a mayor before the end of the four-year term is possible only through a local referendum (Dolnicki 2006 and 2009, Piasecki 2005, Mausch-Dębowska forthcoming 2011). The introduction of direct elections of mayors and their greater competencies was also an attempt to counter perceived decreasing public support for local governments by increasing citizens' interest in local elections and to strengthen the democratic accountability of local government (Council and Mayor) for local policies. The 2002 Act has widened the exercise of direct democracy, introduced another local governance actor and, according to Blok (2006:187), made local communities stronger actors as well by making mayors directly accountable to local residents.

Polish local government was designed to be a democratic organisation and to embody local democracy but also, clearly designed to be an effective part of the state apparatus e.g. elected mayors, etc. The reforms of local government introduced after 1989 brought a

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<sup>155</sup> Act on Direct Election of Rural and Urban Mayors and City Mayors, dated 20 June 2002, Journal of Laws, 2002, No. 113, Item 984 (consolidated text based on: Journal of Laws, 2002, No. 113, Item 984, No. 127, Item 1089, No. 214, Item 1806, Journal of Laws, 2004, No. 102, Item 1055, Journal of Laws, 2005, No. 175, Item 1457, Journal of Laws, 2006, No. 218, Item 1592, Journal of Laws, 2007, No. 25, Item 162, No. 48, Item 327, Journal of Laws, 2008, No. 180, Item 1111, Journal of Laws, 2009, No. 213, Item 1652).

<sup>156</sup> cf. recent moves to directly elected mayors in the UK (Stoker 2004).

<sup>157</sup> In 1990-2001 the position of the mayor who was Chairperson of the Council's collective Executive Board elected from among councillors was weak. The mayor was elected by the *gmina* Council for the four-year term. But in practice a mayor could have been abrogated by the simple majority of councillors during any session of the council. This regulation resulted in a very unstable position of executives and in some cases made any coherent policy extremely difficult.

major shift as they broke up the five big monopolies of the communist regime. The five spheres that underwent decentralisation were political power, public authority, public property, public finance and public administration (Regulski 2003:207; Yoder 2003). Local government was to enroot democratic practices and be the first and main step towards decentralising the public administration (Kotulski 2002:47). New laws and their amendments initiated from the top and from the bottom were relevant to the progress of devolution. In Poland between 1990-1997 local government's position was strengthened. The amending of the 1990s early laws and the introduction of new laws after the year 2000 may be taken as both a response to a changing situation and an outcome of the learning experience.

### **3.4. Local government and local democracy in Poland**

As democracy is not guaranteed by the existence of any kind of set of features which are given in its definitions, the actual advancement of decentralisation and democratisation in a post-communist state needs to be assessed<sup>158</sup>. Following Crawford (1997), I define democracy as the ability of people to affect decisions that shape their everyday lives<sup>159</sup>. This more sociological rather than institutional approach points to the complexity of the transition process in Poland. Indeed democracy is the social and political responsibility of everybody involved, which means that the political participation of citizens can contribute to the democratic performance of the local government. The objective of this section is to identify issues and areas which require further research by reviewing the position of Polish local government and the tools and practice of local democracy after the year 2000 in the light of the reforms discussed in section 3.3. Firstly the actual legal and fiscal autonomy of Polish *gminas* are briefly reviewed. Later, laws relevant to local democracy and its exercise are discussed. This includes elections and referenda but public consultations are also mentioned. Finally, further devolution of local government in large Polish municipalities, i.e. options of subdivision into 'Districts' or 'Estates' are presented.

Dolnicki (2006:29) argues that while discussing the position and status of the Polish *gmina* as the basic unit of the state organisation after 1990, one should not talk about its autonomy but independence or self-reliance (*samodzielność*) or self-governance

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<sup>158</sup> Actually a periodic assessment of any democracy is desirable.

<sup>159</sup> Crawford (1997: 81) writes that democracy "is true of decisions made within the home, at the workplace, in the school or university, in the town council, at the national or federal levels of government".

(*samorządność*). He (2006:30) emphasises that self-governance includes the *gmina's* responsibility for its actions and performance. In fact, Polish local government is autonomous in terms of its operations. The independence or freedoms of local *gmina* government include the right to issue local laws (legislative), design the budget structure and own property (fiscal), employ and dismiss local government office employees (management of human resources), structure the division of administrative labour (organisational) and to prioritise local needs (planning).

It follows that today Polish local government is designed to be relatively independent of state authorities. The division of power has been designed to strengthen citizens' control of the execution of public tasks and local policy-making. Local government's autonomy is safeguarded in national legislature. Polish *gminas* are not 'states within the state' but relatively autonomous units within the democratic state system. The Polish Constitution of 1997, Article 171, item 1, reads that it is the *legality* of actions by a local government that is a subject of review<sup>160</sup>. It is the state as a system of governance which has reserved its right to design and define the structure of local *gmina* organisation, its tasks and ways of their execution. Thus in Poland local autonomy is a kind of 'functional autonomy' of territorial self-government (*cf.* Dolnicki 2006:28-29). Wójcik (1999:23) agrees, emphasising that autonomy in the Polish context refers to a form of legislative power, i.e. *gmina's* right to design and pass local Acts, and thus *gmina's* autonomy should be debated in reference to the Polish Constitution. He adds that the decentralisation of administration has primarily focused on the issue of *gmina's* independence/self-reliance while respecting the rule of law. The *gmina* community with its local authorities are now actors taking part in self-governance and the state has the subsidiary role locally.

In addition to legal autonomy, the Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government (1990) and the Polish Constitution (1990 and 1997) gave local government its fiscal autonomy. It has been a complex process. The crucial provisions were the granting to *gminas* the status of the juristic person and the right to own communal property. The latter was part of the more comprehensive processes of devolution where some state enterprises became municipally

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<sup>160</sup> Article 171: (1) The legality of actions by a local government shall be subject to review. (2) The organs exercising review over the activity of units of local government shall be: the Prime Minister and voivods and regarding financial matters - regional audit chambers. (3) On a motion of the Prime Minister, the *Sejm* may dissolve a constitutive organ of local government if it has flagrantly violated the Constitution or a statute. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland 1997 (*op. cit.*).

owned. The degree of fiscal autonomy and the status of juristic person are decisive for the performance of local government.

This means that *gminas* have their own sources of income and a granted right to a share in the state budget income, depending on the public tasks assigned to them. This share takes the form of subventions and earmarked grants from the state budget for the implementation of particular tasks. *Gmina* budgets, separated from the state budget, have become the basis for those units to conduct sovereign fiscal activities, based on a yearly-drafted budget. (Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska 2002:1995)

Polish local government<sup>161</sup> given its political and fiscal freedom to take decisions on local developments could start investment projects. This has encouraged a reform of locally provided public services. Former technical departments in local administration were restructured and became enterprises owned by local government or were privatised. Consequently, according to Regulski (2000:381), the effectiveness of such enterprises and the quality of their public services have improved. This supports Soós' claim that "The wider the local autonomy is, the more room for maneuver the local government has. This increases the possibility of extracting more local resources, from more complex strategies and finding innovative solutions in policy-making." (Soós 2001:22). Advancing fiscal decentralisation and the empowerment of local *gmina* self-governments have had a significant impact on local budgets. Already in 1994 it was observed that:

the *gmina* councils are beginning to view the budget as more than a financial accounting tool proscribed and prescribed by the central government. They are beginning to see the potential for using the budget as a policy and management tool. (Thurmaier 1994:84)

Twelve years later Kotulski (2002:29) while discussing the position of local government in Poland observed that only local Councils warrant rational (economical) allocation of public money to investments that meet local needs. The 2000-2004 data on the structure of local governments' financial resources (Table 3.3. below) demonstrates that the fiscal autonomy of local government is increasing as its budget depends more and more on the local *gmina's* own revenue<sup>162</sup>. The *gmina's* fiscal autonomy lies in real estate tax, property

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<sup>161</sup> At the 3 tiers.

<sup>162</sup> "The legal basis defining the processes connected with the accumulation and allocation of public funds is the Law on Public Finance, dated 26 November 1998 (Journal of Laws No. 155, item 1014) with later amendments. The legal basis for the financial management of local self-government entities is the Act on Incomes of Local Self-government Entities, dated 26 November 1998 (Journal of Laws, No. 150, item 983) with later amendments, as well as the Act on *Gmina* Self-government, dated 8 March 1990 (Journal of, Laws 1996 No. 13, item 74) with later amendments, the Act on Powiat Self-government, and the Act on Voivodship Self-government, dated 5h June 1998 (Journal of Laws, No. 91, items 576 and 578) with later

revenues and other own revenues which in the case of cities with poviats status constitute one third of their income (31.4% in 2000, 36.7% in 2003 and 36.1% in 2004)<sup>163</sup>.

The revenue of the City of Poznań is dynamic. Some changes are due to modifications in budget group classification<sup>164</sup> which makes comparisons of pre- and post 2007 entries difficult.<sup>165</sup> The revenue structure of the City of Poznań in 2007, 2008 and January - September 2009 is given below (Table 3.4).

Fiscal autonomy has a positive effect on local democracy. Blok (2006:182) argues that the *gmina*'s fiscal autonomy and its juristic person status may be interpreted as either *gminas*' autonomy in areas/domains delegated to the *gmina* (community and unit) by the state or as institutionalisation of the *gmina* as an actor within the state system. The institutionalised local actor has a prescribed role and thus its freedom is limited by law which makes local government dependent on the state. Blok's nuanced distinction appears to be the core of discussions about local government's autonomy and place. In practice, however, "legal regulations are not fully decisive for the position and role of local self-government" (Blok 2006:182, trans. OM.). Blok emphasises that legislature may not correspond to reality. That is why it is essential to investigate the actual role and performance of local government. It follows that case studies are essential to the evaluation of both the position

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amendments." *Główny Urząd Statystyczny* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office] Poznań City Budget, General Notes, GUS, [http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/poznan/ASSETS\\_07m18\\_00.pdf](http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/poznan/ASSETS_07m18_00.pdf), accessed 15.09.2010.

<sup>163</sup> See also Bury and Swianiewicz 2003.

<sup>164</sup> Revenue and expenditure of local self-government entities budgets are grouped on the basis of budget classification, introduced by the Regulation of the Minister of Finance (latest in 2007). The revenue of City budget comprises: "1) own revenue, i.e.: a) revenue from shares in receipts from corporate and personal income taxes, b) receipts from taxes established and collected on the basis of separate acts, i.e.: the tax on real estate, the agricultural tax, the tax on means of transport, receipts from lump sum taxation, taxes on inheritance and gifts, the forest tax, c) receipts from fees established and collected on the basis of separate acts, e.g., the Financial Statute, the Service Act and the Marketplace Act, tax on civil law transactions, d) revenue from property, e.g., income from renting and leasing as well as other agreements with a similar character, e) other income, e.g., administrative fees, local fees, interest on funds deposited in bank accounts, interest on late payments; 2) appropriated allocations: a) from the state budget for: government administration-related tasks, own tasks, tasks realized on the basis of agreements with bodies of the government administration, b) allocations received from appropriated funds, c) other allocations, i.e. appropriated allocations received on the basis of self-government agreements; 3) general subsidies from the state budget transferred to all local self-government budgets for supplementing their own revenue, of which for educational tasks; 4) funds for the additional financing own tasks from non-budgetary sources." *Główny Urząd Statystyczny* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office], 'Poznań City Budget, General Notes' (*ibid.*)

<sup>165</sup> For a detailed explication of the real revenue tax since 2007 see: \_\_\_\_ (2007) 'Real Property Investment Law in Poland - March 2007', *Gide Loyrette Nouel, Association d'Avocats à la Cour de Paris*, Europe Real Estate, [www.europe-re.com/files/00034800/GLN\\_Poland1.pdf](http://www.europe-re.com/files/00034800/GLN_Poland1.pdf), accessed 15.09.2010; \_\_\_\_, 'Guide to Polish Tax Law Research 2007/2008', *The Centre of Tax Documentation and Studies in Lodz, the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Łódź*, <http://cdisp.uni.lodz.pl/GPTLR%202.doc>, accessed 15.09.2010.

of local government and the advancement of democratisation. How funds are allocated to various projects in Poznań will be discussed further in chapter 6.

Table 3.3 Structure of Revenue in Cities with Powiat status, 2000-04. As a Percentage of Total

	2000	2003	2004
Own revenue, of which:			
Real estate tax	10.9	14.9	14.0
Property revenues	8.9	5.9	6.0
Other own revenues	11.6	15.3	16.1
Transfer of personal income tax receipts from state budget	15.7	17.8	24.5
Transfer of corporate income tax receipts from state budget	1.5	1.8	3.3
Appropriated allocations from state budget	20.3	11.8	11.0
General subsidies from state budget	31.2	31.9	24.8
Other financing	0.6	0.6	0.3

Source: Table content cited after Ners (2007:172)

Table 3.4 Structure of Revenue of the City of Poznań budget in 2007, 2008 and January-October 2009. As a Percentage of Total

	2007	2008	Jan.- Sept. 2009
Own revenue, of which:			
Real estate tax	11.5	11.3	11.8
Tax on means of transport	1.3	1.1	1.2
Tax on inheritance and donation	0.5	0.4	0.4
Tax on civil law transactions	4.8	3.6	1.9
Treasury 'stamp' fee	0.8	0.7	0.7
Funds for additional financing of own tasks from non-budgetary sources	8.9	3.5	3.8
Transfer of personal income tax receipts from state budget	30.1	29.9	27.7
Transfer of corporate income tax receipts from state budget	4.7	4.9	4.4
Appropriated allocations from state budget	7.0	8.0	7.0
General subsidies from the state budget	17.8	18.0	22.0

Note: Since 2008 additional funds for financing of own tasks from non-budgetary sources are included in the 'own' revenue.

Source: Author's analysis of data from \_\_\_\_ (2009) *Biuletyn Statystyczny* [Statistical Bulletin], *Główny Urząd Statystyczny w Poznaniu* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office in Poznań], XVIII. no. 3, 3rd quarter. In the Bulletin data 'property revenues' are not listed/singled out.

See also: *Główny Urząd Statystyczny* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office] '*Struktura dochodów i wydatków budżetu jednostek samorządu terytorialnego według rodzajów 2000-2007*' [Structure of revenue and expenditure of local self-government entities budget by types 2000-2007],

[http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/poznan/ASSETS\\_08w39.pdf](http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbcr/poznan/ASSETS_08w39.pdf), accessed 15.09.2010

Decentralisation designed by the reformers was 'an offer' for citizens to practice democracy at the local level. Soós (2001:39) argues that it is the political participation<sup>166</sup> of

<sup>166</sup> According to Soós (2001:38-39) 'political participation' includes such activities as: turnout at local elections, electoral campaigns, formation of action groups, initiation of specific issues-related actions (initiatives), formal inquiries to councillors or committees (petitions), taking part in forums organised by local



citizens which is essential for the democratic performance of the local government. The need for decentralisation did not however mean the automatic resurgence of civil society equipped with democratic structures of local self-government and skills to practice democracy, i.e. to rightfully use democratic procedures (see chapter 2). Mellor and Copperthwaite (1987:3) distinguish two forms of local participation: participation in the expression of community views and participation in the delivery of services. The first kind of participation is most noticeable in electoral processes. It is manifested when citizens can play an active role and influence the quality of their lives by exercising the right to vote and the right to be elected to local authorities. The second is based in the consultative and lobbying processes. These help determine the quality and quantity of services provided within the *gmina*. In Poland the Local Self-Government Act of 1990 designated two ways for local society to participate directly in *gmina* politics: electing council members and participating in local referenda.

*Free elections* to *gmina* councils make councillors<sup>167</sup> accountable to the public that have given them the mandate to represent their interests. The first democratic elections to the almost 2,500 *gmina* councils took place on the 27 May 1990 with a voter turnout of 42.27%. According to election law passed in 1990<sup>168</sup>:

- in *gminas* (municipalities) with populations not exceeding 40,000, elections were conducted as in single-seat constituencies (single-member election wards, majority vote),
- in municipalities with populations over 40,000, in multimember wards in a proportional election system was adopted.

The proportional election system means that the votes won by each party are translated into numbers of seats won. In Poland the d'Hondt method is used. The same system and method are also used in parliamentary election in Poland (also in Austria, Finland, Israel, the Netherlands, Spain) and to the European Parliament. The method helps minor parties win a stronger representation (e.g. Zarycki 1999b).

In the elections in 1994, the turnout was 33.78%. The lack of a quick and expected by many 'switch' to the mythicised Western 'high standard of living' (Schopflin 2003:25) and

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government, taking part in meetings organised by local government or parties (consultations and negotiations).

<sup>167</sup> Since 2002 this applies also to directly elected rural and urban mayors and city mayors.

<sup>168</sup> Act on Electoral Law on Elections to *Gmina* Council, dated 8 March 1990, Journal of Laws, 1990, No. 16, Item 96.

early disillusion with many elements of the post-communist system in Poland led many people to opt out from politics and to voter apathy (Holmes 1997). In both 1990 and 1994 elections the vast majority of candidates and councillors elected were independent or represented local social organisations and in many cases had little political experience. As Kowalczyk (2000:228) underlines:

[...] this situation was favourable on the one hand, because councillors focused on local problems rather than interparty conflicts, but on the other hand, the independence of councillors sometimes paralyzed the activities of local councils. Unfettered by party affiliation, councillors often created ad hoc coalitions in order, for example, to remove the mayor and other members of the municipal administration.

In July 1998, the election law<sup>169</sup> was changed to include elections to *poviat* councils and voivodship self-governments. It included a profound change affecting the *gmina*, i.e. the downsizing of the number of inhabitants from 40,000 to 20,000 in the system of elections to the *gmina* Council:

- majoritarian voting in elections to *gmina* councils in multimember election wards in *gminas* with population not exceeding 20,000,
- proportional voting in elections to *gmina* councils in *gminas* with population over 20,000.

This downsizing has broadened the extent of proportional representation but it also brought local government closer to local inhabitants (majority vote). At the same time the importance of political parties at the local level (the 5% threshold was introduced for them) was to be increased and the idea of local democracy strengthened. The proportional system was also adopted in elections to *poviat* councils and self-governments of voivodships. Voting turnout in the elections to local governments at the level of the councils of *gminas* and to self-governments, i.e. the Assembly (*sejmik wojewódzki*) at the voivodship level<sup>170</sup> in 2002 was 44.23%, i.e. higher than in 1998. Critical here to remember is that whatever the turnout, Miller, Dickson and Stoker (2000:59) insist that the strongest defence of a democratic form of local governance is “the general and pervasive assumption that elective democracy is the right way to run any system of governance, be it central or local”. It is an argument that is strongly supported by Linz and Stepan (1996:6):

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<sup>169</sup> Act on Electoral Law on Elections to Councils of *Gminas* and *Poviats* and the Voivodship Assembly, dated 16 July 1998, Journal of Laws, 1998, No. 95, Item 602.

<sup>170</sup> *Sejmik wojewódzki* – since 1999, voivodship assembly/self-government is elected in general election and represents residents of a voivodship. *Sejmik wojewódzki* is the legislative authority for the voivodship.

a democratic regime is consolidated when a strong majority of public opinion holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern [...] in a society [...] and when the support of anti-system alternatives is quite small or more or less isolated from the pro-democratic forces.

A detailed discussion of turnouts in Poznań (and in Poland) will be presented in chapter 5.

A *Referendum* is a direct vote of the electorate on a question of importance. As a tool in the exercising of local democracy in democratic polities directly it is relatively rare (Gremion 1999:40; cf. Butler and Ranney 1978, Gallagher and Uleri 1996, Spok, Rihackova, Weiss, Bartovic, Dromara 2006) and for this reason its use in Poland is worth close examination. The legal bases for the *gmina* referendum are set up in three Acts and in decisions of the Polish Supreme Court, the Supreme Administrative Court and the Polish Constitutional Tribunal. It has already been mentioned (section 3.3.) that *obligatory referenda* are summoned in three cases: for the raising of a local tax to meet some public programme, the abrogation of the council and of mayors<sup>171</sup> before the end of their term. The 2000 Act on Local Referendum<sup>172</sup>, Article 2.1 reads that in *facultative referenda* residents in units of local government as members of self-governing communities express their choice of a solution of a matter concerning their community by voting provided that the decision about the matter is within the competence and belongs to tasks of the unit. Dolnicki (2006:68) lists three important features of referenda. These are: direct participation of the citizens in expressing their opinions, only one vote per citizen and the will of the majority of all equally righted citizens being decisive in the decision-making process.

In Poland the motion to hold a referendum has to be supported by 10% of eligible voters. The referendum is valid if at least 30% of voters take part in it. The issues vary from abrogation of a mayor or council - for which nation-wide data is available - to very local issues such as whether a local council should take over the responsibility to remove communal waste from local residents and whether all residents should pay a lump sum for the waste removal. Referenda are costly, complicated organisationally and their outcomes are uncertain as a referendum can be declared null and void due to a lack of quorum (Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska 2002). That is why in Poland this new form of taking

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<sup>171</sup> *Wójt* in the case of the rural *gmina* and mayors, i.e. *burmistrz* in case of the urban *gmina* and *prezydent* of a city, i.e. *gmina* with the *powiat* status.

<sup>172</sup> Act on Local Referendum (*op. cit.*).

important decisions is rarely practised if not obligatory. However, Robertson (2002:377) observes that:

The idea that a country might be governed extensively by the use of plebiscites on ordinary policy issues is attractive to some, because it seems to be a way of avoiding the disadvantages of representative democracy without the impracticalities of direct democracy.

The most frequent reason for holding referenda has been the wish to dismiss the council before the end of its term<sup>173</sup>.

In the referenda on abrogation of mayors and/or councils held in 2002-2005, the turnout varied from over 70% to barely 2%. Out of 86 local referenda for which data is available, 11 (nearly 12%) were valid, i.e. turnouts were over 30%<sup>174</sup>. According to Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska's research, in 2000, referenda in gminas were usually initiated (80%) by the citizens or a territorial division of a political party or social organisations operating on the territory of the given gmina. This is a telling example of citizens' initiatives<sup>175</sup>. Only 17.5% of local referenda were initiated by local authorities. Even though the turnout in the referenda in most cases did not exceed the required minimum, the number of referenda in 2002-2005 shows that local communities keep trying to exercise their right to rule their own area.

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<sup>173</sup> "A motion to hold a referendum on abrogation of local authorities can be variously motivated e.g. the most common reasons for the referenda on abrogation were local conflicts in which more often than not issues of personal animosity were more significant than differences of a more political nature. Accusations were mainly very general including mismanagement, the inadequacy of local economic initiatives and even the arrogance and insincerity of elected councillors. Problematic here was the fact that local councils were not consistent in their approach towards conflict situations. Piasecki (2005:89) has argued that in the mid 1990s there appeared to be three types of referenda on abrogation reflecting differences on the motivations for the initiatives. In the case of referenda with political motivations the initiatives were the result of dissatisfaction with the exercise of power by the council. The second group includes referenda which were the result of the conflicts between councillors. In these cases the opposition within the council referred to residents for their support. The third reason for the referenda is the perception that that power is being misused and that being elected is used for personal gain. The last group covers problems rooted in low political culture of residents and communities or better it can be described as the plain lack of knowledge. The reasons were then in most cases due to miscomprehension of local councils' decisions. At the end of the 90s the local government became more political and the local political structures started to exacerbate local relations to achieve their respective political goals." (Mausch-Dębowska forthcoming 2011).

<sup>174</sup> A Local referendum is valid if at least 30% of eligible voters take part in it.

The turnout in national referenda in Poland was similarly to national elections, i.e. it was relatively low: 43% in the 1997 referendum on a new Constitution and 59% in the 2003 referendum on Poland's accession to the European Union.

<sup>175</sup> *Initiatives* which are relevant in the context of referenda are written documents addressed to local authorities but have a more demanding character which derives from the belief that local authorities have different views on certain issues than the local community and that citizens have to step in and take active part in the decision-making process presenting their civil project of resolving a problematic issue and putting their project under voting.

It is commonly assumed that electoral turnouts at the national and local levels of elections or referenda are a gauge to the quality of democracy. However, McManus-Czubińska, Miller, Markowski and Wasilewski (2004) while analysing the issues of turnout at national elections and referenda write that although there can be conditions in which low turnout causes failure of democracy, they do not apply in post-communist Poland, which is why the turnout may matter less for the quality of democracy in Poland now. Low turnout does not lead to unrepresentative government in post-communist Poland because:

[Voting] Abstainers are not at once sufficiently different from regular voters and at the same time sufficiently numerous to render Polish elections unrepresentative. Persistent abstainers are sufficiently different but not sufficiently numerous. And intermittent abstainers are sufficiently numerous but neither sufficiently different nor sufficiently non-participant since, by definition, a proportion of them do in fact turn out at any one election (2004:418).

According to this research:

low turnout does not threaten the legitimacy of the democratic regime in Poland because its legitimacy rests on the overwhelming public view that democracy is the only way to organise governance. It needs not support from anything outside its own internal logic. [...] [In Poland], even the non-participants – and even the persistent non-participants – see no alternative for Poland. There is not even a quantitatively significant sub-culture within the public that sees an alternative (2004:411-412).

What such an argument suggests is that an assessment of the quality of democracy should not be based solely on the single variable of turnouts but rather it should rest on analyses of a number of various factors. Thus quantitative methods should be supported with qualitative research on the quality of democracy.

The exercise of local democracy includes various other forms<sup>176</sup> employed by local governments and citizens. Most interesting are *consultations/negotiations* which are very often part of the decision-making process in preparing legal regulations or acts. They are tools used to review a problem solution. Consultations are mainly meetings at which issues are discussed or advice sought. It is local authorities that often feel the need to ask their local electorate what they think about certain issues. In Poland there are two forms of consultations with citizens: obligatory and facultative (optional). Obligatory consultations

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<sup>176</sup> e.g. *petitions* which are in most cases a collective, written document addressed to local authorities and signed by as many citizens as possible. Petitions should be of interest to local authorities because they can point to issues disputable for the community. In fact petitions present citizens' suggestions, needs and expectations or even demands.

are run in the case of establishing new *gmina* borders<sup>177</sup>, giving them new names and locating the seats of local authorities.<sup>178</sup> Facultative consultations can be run on “other important for the *gmina* matters”. The 1990 Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government does not specify what matters need to be consulted so it is up to the local council to decide whether to hold consultations or not. The *gmina* council is responsible for setting rules and procedures of consultations in an appropriate local act. The 1990 Act does not prescribe any solutions. In practice very frequently consultations take the form of public polls or call-in debates in local media. As there are no regulations in the Act, *gmina* councils should prepare detailed instruction describing the form of consultations used in each particular case, as well as their place and date<sup>179</sup>. The results of consultations are not binding for local authorities. However, as consultations are a form of local democracy, opinions given should be considered important to and by authorities chosen by popular vote and given the mandate to represent the public (representative democracy). The issue of consultations will be elaborated further in chapter 5.

In debates on local government, municipalities have a special place. In Poland an attempt was made at advancing the downsizing of public administration by allowing for establishing community-based *sub-local units* in big cities. The 1990 Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government provided also for establishing ‘accessory’ bodies of *gmina* local government (Article 35). Accessory units in rural *gminas* are *sołectwos* (Article 36) which are territorial communities smaller (usually villages) than the *gmina* of which they are part. *Sołectwo* is governed by its general assembly (*zebranie wiejskie*). In big municipalities, i.e. in cities, accessory units can take the forms of Districts or community-based Estates<sup>180</sup> (*dzielnice* or *osiedla*) governed by their general assemblies or councils (Article 37). Already at the onset of the transformation the situation in big cities was both similar and different from the situation in rural areas (Maczak 2006). In 1990, big cities became huge single *gminas* in terms of their population. Despite their social atomisation, some societal

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<sup>177</sup> The European Charter of Local Self-Government (*op.cit*) suggests that local consultations or referenda should be held in any cases of modification of the territorial division of a country. In the Czech Republic or Slovakia, splits or mergers of local government units have to be approved by the local referendum. “Polish law, however, is still vague about “public consultations”, while final decisions still belong to central authorities.” (Swianiewicz 2001a:21). On drawing local government boundaries see also Paddison 2004.

<sup>178</sup> The 1990 Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government lists situations in which obligatory consultations must take place.

<sup>179</sup> Act on Town and Country Planning, dated 27 March 2003, Journal of Laws, 2003, No. 80, Item 717 includes an example of consultative procedures as it describes the way of informing local communities about new planning projects as well as the procedure allowing citizens to express their opinions about the projects.

<sup>180</sup> The concept of Estates rest on their communities and is not to be confused with housing estates.

bonds in the cities existed in 1989 and the idea of sub-local government units reflected the reformers' recognition of these bonds. In cities there were historic districts (boroughs) with their traditional identities and new housing estates built by building cooperatives (Matczak 2006:146). Under communism residents of housing estates were members of the cooperatives and held general assemblies and elected councils 'supervising' the cooperative's board. Before 1989 and in the early 1990s there were Citizens' Committees in various parts of every city and their membership was local. The reformers of Polish local government wanted to capitalise on these existing institutions. The channelling of the energy in the form of giving the possibility to create the sub-local government level was set not to disturb the newly implemented local government but to strengthen the emerging democratic system. The implementation of sub-local divisions in cities was a kind of an additional effect of democratisation.

The creators of the local government reforms in reference to large towns and cities offered two options of subdivision: either the City Council decides on the division of the city into a number of 'Districts' after consulting local residents (e.g. in Krakow there are 18 districts) or local inhabitants shall organise themselves and establish a community based 'Estate' with the consent of the City Council, i.e. it is residents of an area that present an initiative and motion to establish an 'accessory' sub-local government unit. Sub-local government units are self-governing in accord with the objective of the Polish decentralisation reforms which "was to establish new governing structures and governance practices and to create local self-government as a strong local actor, autonomous from central control" (Regulska 2009:537). They have some legislative power delegated by the *Gmina* Council (*Gmina* Local Self-Government Act, Article 18, Point 7) and their legislative authority is either the General Assembly of Local Residents or the elected urban Estate or District Council. In the case of the city subdivision into Estates, their number mirrors residents' involvement in establishing the Estates. The two options differ as the administrative division into Districts is made at the top (local government) whereas community-based Estates 'divide' the city from the bottom, i.e. they are established on a local community's initiative. Both Districts and Estates are called 'accessory units' of local self-government (cf. Matczak 2006:146)<sup>181</sup>.

The 'accessory unit' is understood as a self-governing community of residents in a given area. Estates and rural *sołectwos* are most 'local', i.e. community based 'units' and are to

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<sup>181</sup> The 1990 Act also identifies *sołectwo* (a rural settlement smaller than *gmina*) as a possible accessory unit.

take care of their community needs. However the legislative power of accessory units is in fact limited to passing decisions on their budget expenditure. Their budget is a fraction of the *gmina* budget. In addition there is a problem with interpreting the executive power of accessory units. The *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act, Article 36 states that in the case of *sołectwo*, its General Village Assembly is the legislative body. It elects the leader (*sołtys*) whose power is executive. The Act, Article 37 states that the legislative body of the urban Estate or District can be either the community General Assembly (like in *sołectwo*) or the community can elect their Council in which case the Estate or District councillors elect their Chairperson and Board members. The Chairperson and Board members have executive power. However since accessory sub-local government units are not juristic persons, their resolutions must be overseen by the *gmina* executive body. The execution of their financial investments must be consulted with and approved by the *gmina* executive body. The Act on Public Procurement (29 January 2004)<sup>182</sup> excludes public entities which do not have the juristic person status from taking direct part in public procurement procedures. This means that whenever public money of (sub)-local government is to be invested, accessory units must pass the actual execution of their investment projects to the *gmina* executive body. The executive power of accessory sub-local government units is limited to overseeing the progress and quality of the project execution. Due to these limitations, the effectiveness of accessory units appears to be a major issue. In 1990, Poznań City Council opted for Estates which were to govern themselves. However, they do not have fiscal autonomy which makes them part of the City Local Self-Government. The provisions which allow for further devolution and their implementation is discussed in the Poznań context in section 3.4 and in chapter 5, section 5.1. Activities of Poznań Estates are investigated in chapter 6.

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<sup>182</sup> Act on Public Procurement, dated 29 January 2004, Journal of Laws, 2004, No. 19, Item 177 (consolidated text based on: Journal of Laws, 2010, No. 113, Item 759). This Act was amended 6 times by 2010: Journal of Laws, 2006, No. 79, Item 551, Journal of Laws, 2007, No. 82, Item 560, Journal of Laws, 2008, No. 171, Item 1058 and No. 220, Item 1420, Journal of Laws, 2009, No. 206, Item 1591 and No. 223, Item 1778.



### **3.5. Conclusions**

In Poland, democratisation started with decentralisation, i.e. creating the structures and processes for local self-governance. The transformation processes and reforms of local government in Poland after 1989 were inevitable as the idea of self-governing is fundamental to democracy. The transformation from communist centralism to a system of democratic local self-government was not just a political and administrative decision. It was a reform aimed at making local government effective and the whole system of governing was made closer to residents giving them a chance to have their say on their daily problems and on services they expect to be provided with by local authorities and on the efficiency and quality of the delivery of services (*cf.* Sochacka 2005). The empowerment of local self-government at the level of the basic administrative unit, i.e. the *gmina* level, was the first significant change of the communist system. *Gminas* – their local authorities and communities - have started exercising the rights to make decisions on issues most important to them. This confirms Soós (2001) observation that:

Wider autonomy may make the local government system more legitimate. Citizens simply take local governments more seriously and regard them as important institutions that influence their everyday lives. In this case people are more willing to participate in local activities. (Soós 2001:22).

The above would not be possible without rejecting the old system and introducing a new one based on the rule of subsidiarity, decentralisation and a democratic mandate for the authorities (Kulesza 2002). The extent to which residents use their rights and whether local government understands its democratic role is examined in chapters 5 and 6.

My case study of local government and democracy in Poznań has been designed to facilitate evaluation of both the current position of local government and the advancement of democratisation in Poland. In chapter 5 devoted to the working of local government in Poznań I focus on analysing its further devolution, i.e. sub-local community based Estates, their role and relations with the City authorities. My analyses include turnouts as well as patterns of consultations and local authorities' involvement in other activities promoting local democracy advancement. Since an evaluation of how democracy has become embedded is a complex task, I have used both quantitative and qualitative methods. Their choice and use will be explicated in the following chapter on methodology.

## **4. Methodology and research questions**

In this thesis I investigate processes related to the consolidation of local democracy in Poland. The analysis is based on case studies of democratic practices in a major Polish city, i.e. Poznań and two of its sub-local (neighbourhood level) units called Estates which are community-based self-governing organisations: Św. Łazarz and Ławica. The research deals with complex issues surrounding the current condition of Polish democracy. My literature review pointed to issues which needed to be investigated in more detail. A major issue was the prevailing opinion that civil society in CEE is weak. Consequently it was necessary to search for answers to specific questions about the effectiveness and efficiency of civil society and local government in Poznań.

In this chapter the research design and research questions are presented (4.1) followed by a discussion of the idea of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches (4.2). The role of the researcher and my influence on the research is reflected upon in section 4.3. This is followed with sections in which I describe techniques used in my research: the case study approach (4.4), questionnaires (4.5) and interviews (4.6). Ethical issues and data triangulation will be brought up where relevant.

### **4.1. Research Design and Research Questions**

The research programme was divided into 6 stages (Figure 4.1). Firstly I worked on the literature review, familiarising myself with the issues related to the functioning of local democracy in Poland focusing on its formal structures. In summer 2006 (July) I went on a preliminary research trip to Poznań to check the availability of data and the feasibility of conducting surveys (materials and whom I could interview so establishing preliminary contacts). At that time I decided to choose Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates as the two case study areas within the city of Poznań. The next stage involved extensive preparations for the main research trip to Poland. This time was spent on exploring issues relevant to the practices of democracy in Poland but most importantly on formulating my research questions (see Table 4.1), choosing appropriate methods and the wording of questions for interviews and for questionnaires. Between April – August 2007 I carried out my research in Poznań where I conducted interviews (see Appendix 1 A:1-1; A:1-2 for interview questions) and questionnaires (see Appendix 1 A:1-3; A:1-4) on which my analysis of the outcomes of democratisation is based. During this stage of the research the re-adjustment and verification of questions for interviews and questionnaires took place. Subsequently I

began the analyses of material collected during the field trip. This included questionnaire analysis using SPSS software and the processing of the interview data (see Figure 4.3). The next stage involved the re-examination of literature review and other sources necessary to filling gaps in the data and build triangulation. Those last two stages fed into one another and into the final stage, i.e. writing up and formulating conclusions.

Figure 4.1 Research Design



Three trends underpinning the consolidation of (local) democracy in Poland were identified from which it was possible to generate specific research questions (see Table 4.1). The first explored the (re)constituting a system of local government/democracy as means of countering political centralisation. The aim of this process was to derive criteria necessary to identify the working of local government and democracy in practise. This could be realised through an exploration of the reasons for (re)creation of a system of local government in Poland.

Secondly, as the research sought to deal with the complex issues surrounding the current condition of Polish local democracy I wanted to investigate the practices of local government and local democracy. This was to be achieved through in-depth investigation of the operation of local government and local democracy in the city of Poznań. Here the perception of local government/democracy by political elites and by the electorate was analysed against criteria typically defined as principles by which local democracy in liberal democracies should be assessed.

Table 4.1 Research Questions vs. Methods used

Trends defining democratic consolidation	Research Questions	Methods
(Re)constituting a system of local government/democracy as means of countering political centralisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What has been the rationale for (re)creating a system of local government in Poland?</li> <li>- How has the devised system sought to ensure its democratic operation e.g. through the elections and the adoption of representative democracy?</li> <li>- How has the system sought to ensure that local government cannot be 'captured' by 'non-democratic' political groups?</li> <li>- What criteria can be derived to identify the working of local government and democracy in practice?</li> </ul>	Chapter 3
Exploring local government and local democracy in practice	<p>Based on the experience in Poznań:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is local government/democracy perceived by political elites and voters?</li> <li>- How democratic are local (formal) political processes in the city in terms of the criteria identified?</li> </ul>	Chapter 5 Interviews and Questionnaires
Spreading democratic participation through public participation – the role of (local) civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is civil society in Poland to be defined?</li> <li>- What types of civil society become involved in political processes in Poznań? Who becomes involved? Why?</li> <li>- What kinds of (neighbourhood) activities does this involve?</li> <li>- In what ways does the City authority foster local civil society?</li> <li>- What is the role of Estates Councils in Poznań as institutionalized forms of local participation? Does such participation function as part of civil society or as part of the formal structure of government?</li> <li>- How vibrant is civil society in Poznań?</li> <li>- What is its contribution to local democratic processes?</li> </ul>	<p>Chapters 2 and 6</p> <p>Chapter 6 Interviews and Questionnaires</p> <p>Chapters 5 and 6 Interviews and Questionnaires</p>

A third node around which the research was focused was the role of civil society in fostering (local) democracy in Poland, and in particular the contribution of public participation. The background to this third question area was the prevailing opinion that civil society in CEE, including Poland, has been weak. The analyses started with the attempt at defining civil society in Poland. I was interested in the types of civil society organisations being involved in political processes in Poznań, as well as who and why

decided to be involved and in what kind of (neighbourhood) activities. Of obvious importance here were the ways in which the City authorities foster local civil society. Having two Estates as case study areas within Poznań I investigated the role of Estates Councils as institutionalised forms of local participation. Their participation in local political processes harks back to definitional questions – whether they are part of civil society or should be considered more properly as part of the formal structure of local government. Overall analysis of civil society in Poznań facilitated a picture of its vibrancy and its contribution to local democratic processes.

## **4.2. Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches**

Qualitative and quantitative research methods are often considered as opposing approaches (see, for example, Travers 2001:6-12, Bryman 1988, Brannen 1992, Creswell 1994). If the different purposes of the two approaches are highlighted, they may appear to be in binary opposition to one another<sup>183</sup>. However, a quantitative approach can also be taken to explore an area and to generate hypotheses and theories whereas qualitative methods can also serve to test theories and hypotheses (Miles and Huberman 1994:42, Punch 2008:235). Though qualitative research is perceived as being concerned with and best suited to the investigation of the micro-level of social life and quantitative research as relevant to the establishment of findings on a larger scale, such assumptions are not well-grounded as both approaches can describe and be used to describe micro- and macro-scale phenomena (Bryman 1988:147).

In designing my research I followed the suggestions made by Bryman (1988) and assumed that by combining the two approaches more can be learned and discovered as “[a]t a general level, the reasons for combining are to capitalize on the strengths of the two approaches, and to compensate for the weaknesses of each approach” (Punch 2008:240). I considered the following observations about the two approaches. Quantitative data on a political situation (e.g. election results and turnouts) and/or citizens’ activities (e.g. numbers of NGOs) may reveal relationships but it may be more informative if presented against the changing socio-political (and economic) realms. Qualitative research concentrates on how people interpret their everyday lives. It is exploratory and leads to construing notions the content of which follows from the data collected. My objective was

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<sup>183</sup> According to Punch (2008:235), “There is, overall, a correlation between the approach (quantitative or qualitative) and purpose (for example, theory testing or theory generating), but that correlation is neither perfect nor necessary”.

to discover reality in its actual contexts and a qualitative form of research facilitated meeting this objective. Once such contextual data from qualitative research is available, it may facilitate a deeper cause-result analysis (Bryman 1988:144). When designing my research I assumed that the quantitative and the qualitative research would be equally important and complement each other. However when conducting research I noticed that actually “[...] the relative weight accorded to quantitative or qualitative research within a single study may shift over time.” (Bryman 1988:128). In the case of this research it was the qualitative data (interviews) which gave more insight into the democratisation processes.

The processes and phenomena identified in the qualitative research were verified with my quantitative data from questionnaires. The quantitative data helped me analyse and deepen the understanding of the phenomena I had observed while conducting the interviews. In other words, the research employs the logic of triangulation in which “[t]he findings from one type of study can be checked against the findings deriving from the other type.” (Punch 2008:241). Bryman wrote that:

By and large, researchers have viewed the main message of the idea of triangulation as entailing a need to employ more than one method of investigation and hence more than one type of data. Within this context quantitative and qualitative research may be perceived as different ways of examining the same research problem. By combining the two, the researcher’s claims for the validity of his or her conclusions are enhanced if they can be shown to provide mutual confirmation. (Bryman 1988:131)

Thus quantitative and qualitative methods were able to feed into one another and be mutually supportive, strengthening the veracity of the findings.

#### **4.3. The role of the researcher**

There has been a growing recognition among social scientists that understanding the positionality of the researcher is key to understanding how research is actually undertaken (e.g. Herod 1999, Ganga and Scott 2006). My role in the research process was multidimensional and complex. This was due to both my background and the nature of the research which was interdisciplinary. My role as the researcher was frequently dual. It was dual primarily because I was both an insider and an outsider in terms of the areas investigated and in the eyes of my respondents. This situation was beneficial but it also probably incurred certain costs.

My research was interdisciplinary and my professional background and experience are interdisciplinary, though primarily I would consider myself a human geographer. Prior to my PhD studies I studied spatial planning at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and gained some expertise in local government and its operations as well as in recognising community needs and administrative procedures. While working on my PhD thesis I had to update my knowledge of local government by studying new parliamentary and local Acts. I also had to familiarise myself with issues debated mainly in sociology and political science. The need to be aware of sociological research became obvious at an early stage as research into democratisation processes and their effectiveness requires due recognition of civil society. Publications by political scientists helped me widen my background knowledge which was necessary to recognise and interpret the cohabitation and cooperation of local government and civil society. Numerous articles and books and systematically studied press articles published in *Gazeta Wyborcza*<sup>184</sup>, Poznań Region Supplement in particular, helped to deepen my knowledge of local government and it working in Poznań. Participating in the seminars of the Local Government Research Group organised by the Faculty of Sociology of the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań was helpful. Another source of my new knowledge were materials on the changing quality of life obtained from the City Hall of Poznań. I also used data published on the internet including the reliable and complete data published by The National Electoral Commission (<http://www.pkw.gov.pl>). My knowledge of Polish as a native speaker of the language was an advantage as it facilitated full access to documents and other publications in Polish. The insight gained is both interesting and challenges results of research done in one discipline only. However, interdisciplinary research is demanding and it is difficult to balance the objectives of different disciplines, even where, as in the case of political science and human geography, they are inter-connected.

While conducting my field research in Poland, I was aware of my dual role as a researcher. I was an insider in the sense of being Polish and have interpersonal skills which do not make me a foreigner, i.e. an outsider. Being an insider was advantageous while conducting interviews. I was not a true outsider though where I was a PhD student at the University of Glasgow. Further, I was given the impression that being a Pole who was completing doctoral research at a British university significantly improved the quality of information

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<sup>184</sup> The most popular broadsheet daily in Poland. \_\_\_\_ (2009) '*Jakie są najpopularniejsze gazety w Polsce?*' [What are the most popular newspapers in Poland?], 20 February, Wirtualnemedi.pl, <http://www.wirtualnemedi.pl/artykul/jakie-sa-najpopularniejsze-gazety-w-polsce#>, accessed 14.08.2010.

shared by the interviewees. I had a feeling that my respondents (interviewees) were positively impressed and thought it was worth the effort to introduce the West to the results of the Polish transformation and to propagate information about Poznań. At the same time the interviewees exhibited a Polish national characteristic, i.e. they tended to be excessively critical and negative about Poland's reality. Actually my insider/outsider role kept changing during the interviews. I was an outsider when I asked my respondents to let me interview them. I was an insider shortly after an interview had started. The interviewees were aware that because of who I was I would be that much more able to verify facts about Polish local government development and the city of Poznań. This generated some limitations because as Gerson and Horowitz (2000:212) claim being an outsider gives one the advantage of asking probing and even silly or stupid questions. I could not afford to act like that because it would belittle my role as a researcher in the researcher – respondent relationship. Hopefully this problem was overcome by positioning myself between the 'western world' and the respondents. I did not pretend to be an outsider. I took care of being perceived as a kind of active, knowledgeable academic commentator. I chose a negotiator's role to be in a position to ask for basic information and clarification 'explaining' that otherwise much would remain unknown to the West.

It is obvious that my very person and presence influenced the research but these were inevitable due to its nature. My choice of the role was informed and part of my tactic. I was aware of the high Polish discourse contextuality (see section 4.6 and Fourcade and Hazen 2007) in which much remains non-verbalised under the assumption that what is 'obvious' does not need be said. Answers to some of the questions were 'obvious' to my Polish respondents. In other words, some of the questions might have appeared as irritatingly redundant. The communication pattern particular to Poles is not straight forward; it is abundant with implications, digressions and side remarks. These implications and what was 'obvious', i.e. what remained unsaid, were a major problem. The interviewees tended to follow the Polish pattern and frequently assumed that I knew what the situation was or what they meant. Acting as a knowledge moderator whose aim was to fill in the gaps, I frequently asked for clarification and succeeded in lowering the contextuality of the interviewees' responses as more was verbalised by them, i.e. the answers elicited were more informative. The interviewees willingly cooperated. At the same time it is likely that



some events and phenomena would not have been mentioned by the interviewees to an 'ignorant' outsider. This would limit the depth of the research.<sup>185</sup>

My way of balancing between the positions of the insider and semi-outsider was beneficial for this research. The fact that I was treated as a 'semi-outsider' influenced the amount and quality of information I succeeded to elicit. The interviewees were not 'afraid' to talk to me. I noted that it was important to them that the thesis would be written in English (limited readership) and that I was 'an academic researcher not a journalist'. In other words the respondents felt 'safe' and trusted me. I took into account the ethical implications to make sure that the reputation of academic research and of the University of Glasgow would be treated with respect equally with the good name of the individuals and communities researched.

In this situation it was beneficial for my research that I chose to use both qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaire) research methods. The logic of triangulation increases the reliability of the research and my approach allowed me to explore the continuum of objectivity/subjectivity of the chosen approaches. In qualitative research it is assumed that the investigator is party to how researchers 'impose' their 'meanings' and interpretations on the research carried out. However trivial it may appear, it cannot be ignored that researchers do function within cultures and the meanings they refer to are fed with their own experiences<sup>186</sup>. Consequently social researchers can hardly be fully impartial in their research. We have opinions, choose topics, divide reality in different ways and research work is a sequence of choices made. My choices have been taken with a view to increase my impartiality and reduce any bias<sup>187</sup>. They were made while designing my questionnaire and interview questions and while establishing relations with the interviewees. I used quantitative methods to achieve a healthy balance to my interpretation of the research results.

Working on my thesis on Poland's democratisation at the University of Glasgow helped increase this impartiality. I have a native knowledge of Polish culture-based and history-rooted phenomena which I have recognised as different while comparing them with

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<sup>185</sup> During the interviews respondents mentioned many events and phenomena which needed my comments while writing this thesis to explain their relevance to an outsider.

<sup>186</sup> That is why it is always important to identify the appropriateness and 'accuracy' of the tools used (Yin 1989).

<sup>187</sup> According to Adams and Schvaneveldt (1985:8) the investigator in the research process "needs to take an objective orientation yet be personally interested as well as motivated to engage in a specific study." which I did and was.

western publications and my UK experience. I was encouraged to confront it and Polish publications with western ideas and research patterns. Writing my thesis was a challenge for many reasons. One of them was to explain the different meanings of supposedly common terms and concepts and to monitor the differences.

#### **4.4. Case Study Approach**

It was clear at the outset of the research programme how little was known and has been investigated on local democracy in Poland. Having reviewed the literature I decided that arguments based on widely accepted principles (deductive reasoning) which prevail in the literature on democratisation in CEE should be complemented with detailed descriptions of specific developments (inductive reasoning). Inductive arguments have been missing in the literature. This has limited the debate on consolidation. Deductive arguments used in the debate on democratic consolidation in post-communist states stem from transposing western patterns of democratic practices, various manifestations of civil society's activities included. Interpretations of democratisation patterns and advancement were critical and based on scattered data. The questions which I thought needed to be asked were missing. Another limitation has been rooted in overlooking micro-scale (local) developments which are democratic and not necessarily visible in the macro-scale (region or country).

The decision was taken to focus on the experience of Poznań – the city and its two sub-local units called Estates. The research questions pointed to the complexity of research on democratisation and to the need for comprehensive research exploring the progress of democratic consolidation. The case study method or strategy was chosen as the aim was to provide a versatile and in-depth description and diagnosis of political processes within a community. Thus a wide range of variables was to be considered in natural settings (Punch 2008:144). The case study strategy has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case (Punch 2008:144). A case can be defined as a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context or system (Miles and Huberman 1994, Stake 1994, 1995, Yin 2003). Local democracy has its bounded local context<sup>188</sup>. A city as an object of a case study is a bounded socio-political system, i.e. it has boundaries

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<sup>188</sup> e.g. local elections, local needs, local civic society. It is bounded, i.e. limited by national laws to which referenced need to be made. Yin (2003) points out that the boundaries between the case and the context are not necessarily clearly evident. Nonetheless, the researcher needs to identify and describe the boundaries of the case as clearly as possible.

(area, residents, local government, etc.). In my research the boundaries were taken as the administrative boundaries of the City of Poznań and the two Estates within the city.

Identification of my case study areas occupied two phases. Firstly a decision was taken to focus on the self-governance of the City of Poznań. While interviewing experts, members of local authorities, journalists and Poznań based members of Parliament I tried to learn their opinions about the functioning of local government in Poznań, including its sub-local and self-governing Estates. With this knowledge two community-based Estates were chosen to conduct questionnaire research aimed at learning residents' opinions about democratic practices in Poznań, the relations these sub-local communities had with the Poznań authorities and the overall functioning of civil society.

An important feature of the case study strategy is that it allows for the inclusion of the points of view of multiple 'actors' in the research. That is to say, it is multi-perspectival, meaning that the researcher investigates the perspective of all 'actors' and that of their groups and interactions among them. I was an insider, an outsider and a mediator. It should be observed that an understanding of cultural systems of action (Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg 1991) refers to sets of interrelated activities in which the actors are engaged in a social situation. Critically, case study research is not sampling research<sup>189</sup> (Stake 1995:4). Selecting cases must be done so as to maximize what can be learned, in the period of time available for the study (Tellis 1997). My research was selective focusing on issues fundamental to understanding the advancement of democracy. As is usual in research, time constraints limited the feasibility of undertaking research of the entire city. A case study strategy was an informed choice aimed at increasing the efficiency of the research (Stake 1994). Clearly, a case study can be criticised for being 'only' a case study, however as Punch (2008:147) wrote: "Properly conducted case studies, especially in situations where our knowledge is shallow, fragmentary, incomplete or non-existent, have a valuable contribution to make [...]" (see also Gomm, Hammersley and Foster 2000). Given the nature of this study, its strategy was mainly exploratory<sup>190</sup>. I hoped to reveal phenomena to which attention should be paid.

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189 "Case study research is not sampling research. We do not study a case primarily to understand other cases. Our first obligation is to understand this one case. In intrinsic case study, the case is pre-selected. In instrumental case study, some cases would do a better job than others. Sometimes a 'typical' case works well but often an unusual case helps illustrate matters we overlook in typical cases." (Stake 1995:4)

190 A case study strategy can be exploratory and/or explanatory. While explanatory case studies are used in deductive, quantitative research, exploratory case studies are relevant for inductive qualitative research (Yin

Of the three different types of case study identified by Stake (1994)<sup>191</sup> it was decided to use the instrumental case study as the means of gaining insight into the issue of democratic consolidation and the condition of civil society. This approach has pointed to areas which are worth investigating. Its results can help verify earlier findings on democratic consolidation processes in CEE. The research sought to identify possible interrelations between local government and civil society to gain an in-depth insight into the functioning of communities within the city of Poznań as well as the meanings and practices of democracy in local arenas at the interface between local politics and everyday life. To investigate the involvement of (sub) local communities in public life, the decision to select two Estates with very different socio-economic and spatial characteristics was deliberate (see subsection 4.4.1). In each of my Estate studies the same patterns of analysis were used to increase the objectivity and reliability of the results.

#### 4.4.1. The case study areas: City of Poznań and Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates

The main reason for choosing the city of Poznań for my case study was that I was familiar with its reputation as a leader in terms of local government (1st tier) initiatives. Poznań is the seat of both The Union of Rural Gminas of the Republic of Poland<sup>192</sup> (founded in 1925, reactivated in 1993) joined by over 550 rural *gminas* and The Association of Polish Cities<sup>193</sup> (founded in 1917, reactivated in 1991) joined by 306 towns and cities the population of which accounts for around 75% of the urban population in Poland.<sup>194</sup> In 2009 in the 5th Polish ranking of local governments by the *Rzeczpospolita* daily<sup>195</sup>, Poznań came first in the category of cities with powiat status. It was Poznań's consecutive fourth victory. In 2009 Poznań was judged to be the most citizen friendly city in the ranking of *Przekrój*

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2003:6, 20). However the exploratory strategy “does not necessarily exclude quantitative methods as it may also use questionnaires and numerical data” (Punch 2008:145).

<sup>191</sup> Stake (1994:445) distinguished three main types of case study: 1. the intrinsic, 2. the instrumental and 3. the collective case. Punch (2008:144 after Stake 1994) defines them as follows: 1. where the study is undertaken because the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case; 2. where a particular case is examined to give insight into an issue, or to refine a theory; 3. where the instrumental case study is extended to cover several cases, to learn more about the phenomenon, population or general condition.

<sup>192</sup> *Związek Gmin Wiejskich Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, [www.zgwrp.org.pl](http://www.zgwrp.org.pl), accessed 15.10.2009.

<sup>193</sup> *Związek Miast Polskich*, [www.zmp.poznan.pl](http://www.zmp.poznan.pl), accessed 15.10.2009.

<sup>194</sup> Warsaw, on the other hand, is the seat of The Association of Polish Districts [Poviats] founded in 1939, reactivated in 1999, [*Związek Powiatów Polskich*], [www.zpp.pl](http://www.zpp.pl), accessed 15.10.2009, The Union of Polish Metropolises (founded in 1990) [*Unia Metropolii Polskich*], [www.selfgov.gov.pl](http://www.selfgov.gov.pl), accessed 15.10.2009 and The Union of the Voivodship of the Republic of Poland (founded in 2002) [*Związek Województw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*], [www.zwrp.pl](http://www.zwrp.pl), accessed 15.10.2009.

<sup>195</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2009) ‘Ranking Samorządów 2009’ [Ranking of Local Government 2009], *Rzeczpospolita Daily*, 23 June, <http://www.rp.pl/temat/331858.html>, accessed 15.08.2010.

weekly<sup>196</sup>. This ranking was performed in 2009 for the first time. What is interesting is that Poznań came first in 2 criteria only but won because the city was judged not to perform poorly in any of the criteria used. In the context of the rankings and the reputation of the city, the research on the quality of local democracy promised a critical evaluation of the extent to which local democratic consolidation had been achieved in the city.

Another reason for choosing Poznań as the object of my research was that Poznań was one of the few Polish cities to have brought accessory sub-local government bodies - the Councils of Estates - into operation (Matczak 2006:150). Poznań community-based Estates are both sub-local level units of local self-government and community-based organisations of civil society. Because of their origin (chapter 5), I decided that by investigating their current position and role in local democracy the insight into the democratic consolidation within one of the biggest cities in Poland would be deepened. The research on the Estate Council's limitations and effectiveness and the Estate community's involvement are a major issue investigated in this thesis.

Besides these reasons relating to the choice of Poznań there are also more pragmatic reasons for its selection that were to have significance for the research. In particular, being a native of Poznań gave me insider knowledge of the city which became particularly important where there were gaps in the secondary data. Thus, (as demonstrated below) the lack of any neighbourhood statistics for Polish cities is a major constraint in understanding how they are internally differentiated. My knowledge of Poznań's geography helped to bypass the problem.

From a historical perspective (1793-1918)<sup>197</sup>, in Poznań and the whole Wielkopolska region<sup>198</sup> the level of society's self-organisation was more developed than in other parts of Poland. Local identification and traditions of self-governance have long been strong

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<sup>196</sup> Cichoński (2009) '*Ranking Miast Polskich: Gdzie się żyje najlepiej?*' [Rating of Polish Cities. Where living standards are highest?], *Przekrój Weekly*, 18 June, [www.przekroj.pl/pub/files/miasta\\_tabela\\_03.pdf](http://www.przekroj.pl/pub/files/miasta_tabela_03.pdf), accessed 20.10.2009.

Criteria included: unemployment rate, average personal income, street density/km<sup>2</sup>, public transportation, population density, number of places in nurseries and kindergartens, results of school leaving examinations (junior high and A level), crimes/1000 inhabitants, length of court proceedings, availability of gynaecologists (waiting lists), hospital beds/10,000 inhabitants, Polish 'NHS' funds passed to GPs, price of 1 cubic metre of water, price of 1 square metre in new housing developments, access to wireless internet, length of bike routes, green spaces, air pollution, population numbers per swimming pool, cinema theatre, opera house, theatre, concert hall etc.

<sup>197</sup> In 1793 with the second partition of Poland, Poznań fell within the borders of Prussia.

<sup>198</sup> Wielkopolska refers to a traditional region/province the area of which is similar but not identical with the now Wielkopolskie Voivodship. In Polish "Wielkopolska" is frequently used instead of "Wielkopolskie Voivodship".

(compare Pokładecki 1996:14). Since 1989 residents of Poznań and the region have regularly given support to liberal-democratic ideas including choices made in national and local elections (*cf.* chapter 5, section 5.2; on the issue of ‘Poland A and B’ compare Cześniak 2007).

These arguments (together with section 1.3 in chapter 1) may give an impression that Poznań is hardly typical of Poland. For historical reasons, Poland, like many other countries, is a diversified country and it would be difficult to claim that any of its parts or cities is typical of Poland. I decided to investigate if in the city perceived as a leader of local government reform, democratic practices have already been introduced and exercised effectively. My research questions were factual and aimed at filling the gap apparent while reviewing the literature. I was strongly motivated to see beyond others’ opinions to help local researchers, communities and authorities see patterns and areas that need improvement.

Poznań is a single administrative unit, an urban (municipal) *poviat*, which is subdivided into sub-local units called Estates which are community-based self-governing organisations (see chapter 1, section 1.3 and Figure 1.6). Thinking about the selection of Estates that would be the subject of detailed study, and from a knowledge of the spatial-functional structure of Poznań two different Estates which would represent different types of area in Poznań were selected (Figure 4.2). Photos illustrating differences between the architecture/development of the two Estates are given at the end of this chapter (see Figures 4.4, 4.5, 4.6).

Św. Łazarz Estate is located in the inner zone almost consistent with the 1900 borders of Poznań. It was in 1900 when Poznań expanded and what is now the Św. Łazarz Estate<sup>199</sup> was incorporated into the city limits. The spatial-functional structure of Św. Łazarz Estate is typical of an inner city zone – high density, compact, with narrow streets and high concentrations of commercial services and of tenement housing of different periods (including tall blocks of flats).

Ławica Estate, on the other hand, is in the peripheral zone. Its status as a former village has been maintained in its structure. A few older buildings have a rural character but agricultural functions as such have vanished and the zone has been transformed into a new

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<sup>199</sup> On the history of Św. Łazarz see: Warkoczewska (1998) (Editor-in-Chief) *‘Święty Łazarz’* [Saint Łazarz], *Chronicle of the City of Poznań*, KMP, no. 3.

residential area. However, there still exists, in the mentality of people, a division into ‘old’ and ‘new’ Ławica (cf. Witkowski 2005:132). A *Brief Monograph of Ławica* [*Zarys Monografii Ławicy*] (Witkowski 2005) reads that Ławica as a village was included within the borders of Poznań during the Second World War, in 1940<sup>200</sup>. It is a green Estate. The housing area is located in the north-east of the Estate. In the North it borders the international airport. Its western part is covered with allotments and a forest. Its southern part is also wooded. (see Figure 4.2).

The two Estates differ considerably in terms of their area and population size. In 2006<sup>201</sup> Św. Łazarz Estate had an area of 2.2 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 31,496. Ławica Estate had an area of 7 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 5,532. The density of population differs greatly: 14,316 persons/km<sup>2</sup> in Św. Łazarz Estate versus 790 persons/km<sup>2</sup> in Ławica Estate. In Św. Łazarz Estate it is 18 times higher. Both Estates were established in 1996<sup>202</sup> and thus their experience with community self-government covers a similar period. The location of the two Estates on the map of Poznań is presented below in Figure 4.2.

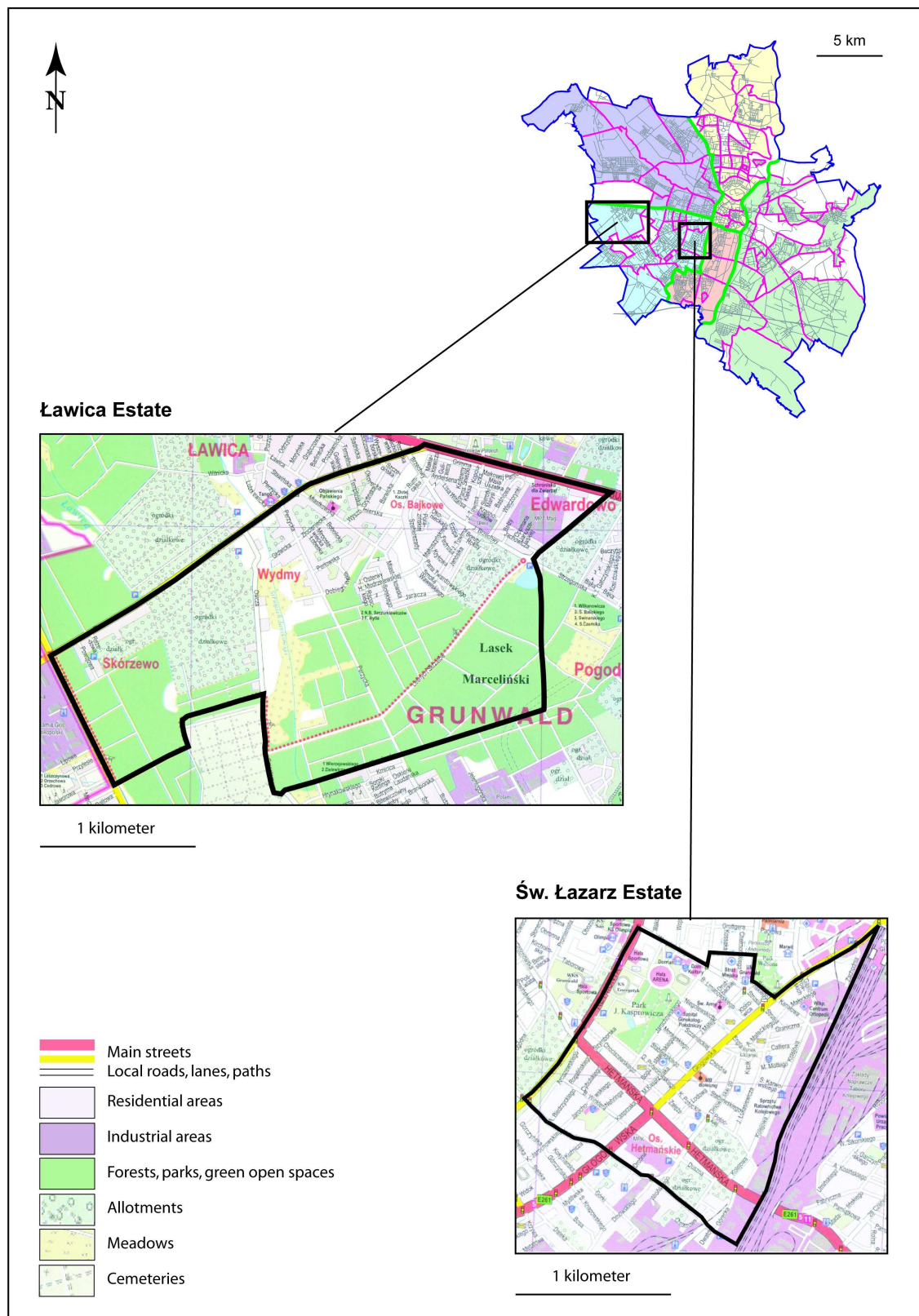
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<sup>200</sup> At the time Poznań was part of the Third Reich. In 1950 the former Ławica village was fully incorporated.

<sup>201</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2007) ‘Zestawienie danych dotyczących Osiedli w Poznaniu (aktualizacja 30.01.2007 - 68 osiedli)’ [Compilation of data on Estates in Poznań (updated 20.01.2007 - 68 estates)], City Hall of Poznań, Department Supporting the City Accessory Units.

<sup>202</sup> Poznań City Council’s Act on establishing the Św. Łazarz Estate in Poznań, dated 19 March 1996, No. XXXV/234/II/96 [*Uchwała Rady Miasta Poznania, nr XXXV/234/II/96 z dnia 19 marca 1996 r. w sprawie powołania Osiedla Św. Łazarza w Poznaniu*] and Poznań City Council’s Act on establishing the Ławica Estate in Poznań, dated 16 January 1996, No. XXXI/216/II/96 [*Uchwała Rady Miasta Poznania nr XXXI/216/II/96 z dnia 16 stycznia 1996 r. w sprawie powołania Osiedla Ławica w Poznaniu*].

Figure 4.2 Location of two case study areas (Estates) within the city of Poznań



Source: Based on: Accessory Units /Estates/ of the City of Poznań, scale 1:100 000, [City Hall of Poznań, Department Supporting the City Accessory Units](#) and Map of Poznań [*Mapa Poznania*] skala 1:23 000, Wydawnictwo Piętko; Digital Cartography: Olga Mausch-Dębowska



#### **4.5. Questionnaires**

To learn about residents' opinions about the functioning of local government in Poznań and to investigate the residents' involvement in local affairs I used questionnaires. Questionnaires as opposed to face-to-face interviews can uncover the views of a larger segment of society. Quantitative research based on questionnaires helps investigate the distribution of various opinions and attitudes, their relationships with different society segments distinguished by demographical, social, economic and political criteria (*cf.* Hausner 1999:122). My choice of using a questionnaire was motivated by an interest in finding and estimating society's involvement in community affairs at the micro (Estates) and macro (City) levels. This included actual and declared participation in various forms of activities for the benefit of the community, elections included, and my testing of social cohesion. I also wanted to learn how residents of the two Estates evaluate/perceive elected local councils', the responsiveness of the administration and Poznań authorities' communication with citizens.

Using self-administered paper questionnaires to collect data requires that much more attention is paid to the questionnaire design and wording (Jenkins and Dillman 1997, Fink 2006, Bourque and Fielder 2003). Before designing the questionnaire questions I conducted some preliminary research on Poznań (local laws, local newspapers etc.) to learn about new developments and concerns. The self-administered questionnaire (see Appendix 1 A:1-3; A:1-4 for its Polish and English versions) was divided into 5 sections: (1) Participation in Elections; (2) Functioning of the City Hall of Poznań; (3) Awareness of the activities of Poznań Estate Councils; (4) Functioning of the local community in an estate; (5) Background information. Care was taken of ethical issues. The questionnaire form was headed with a brief note explaining who I was and why I was conducting the questionnaire research. It included information about the questionnaire being anonymous and that it would be treated confidentially, my name and contact details (e-mail and phone).

A key aim was to make the questionnaire straightforward for respondents. Attention was paid to the questionnaire's directness and structural simplicity e.g. to ensure that the questions were easily understandable. The order of questions was also given close attention. The wording of my questions required special effort. I did not make any assumptions about the respondents, only assuming that residents of Poznań have some common experience of living there. Hence questions were worded in such a way that the

respondents would merely report what is true in their opinion/for their situation. As the questionnaire was to be answered by Poles in Poznań, I wrote it in Polish. Translation of questionnaires designed for respondents from other cultures is as problematic as applying other research tools to different cultures<sup>203</sup>. Three colleagues in Poland were consulted about the design and wording of my questionnaire. The questionnaire was piloted on ten residents of Poznań personally known to me. They were students and mature people but, critically, all were residents of the city. Some questions were reworded to make them clear and precise (Jenkins and Dillman 1997, Fink 2006). Only later was the questionnaire translated into English for the purpose of further analysis.

Copies of the self-administered questionnaire were distributed simultaneously in the two Estates – first, door to door and later, to shops. Dates for the collection of completed questionnaires were set. It was a one-off survey aimed at getting answers from predefined communities (residents of the two Estates) in a defined period of time (July - August 2007)<sup>204</sup>. The questionnaire consisted of 42 questions (and 8 questions in the last Background information section).<sup>205</sup> Most of the questions were closed. Only two were open questions (Q27 and Q42). However some yes/no questions were followed by subsequent open-ended questions, mainly in cases when I wanted my respondents to give examples of some behaviour or to show their knowledge of the area (e.g. names of local government politicians). Writing about open-ended questions Adams and Schvaneveldt argued that “[t]he investment of time, motivation level, and attentiveness needed to supply responses for open-ended items typically lead to a low level of response from a sample (...)” (1985:202-203). Indeed, respondents reluctantly answered my open-ended questions. Closed and Likert-type questions required less effort on the part of respondents. I used them to measure the degree to which respondents experienced something or how they evaluated an event<sup>206</sup>.

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<sup>203</sup> “Assuming that there are no universals is as destructive as assuming that all Western ideas apply to all cultures throughout the world. The transferability of constructs and measures from one culture to another must be addressed on a case-by-case basis.” (Behling and Law 2000:4 and Harkness 2003).

<sup>204</sup> That is 2 years after national parliamentary and presidential elections (2005) and 1 year after local elections (2006).

<sup>205</sup> In the process of analysis, answers to 7 questions were found not to be informative (questions 4, 30, 34, 37, 38, 39, 41) and I decided not to process them further. Answers to questions 1-15 and 19-23 are discussed in chapter 5. Answers to questions 16, 18 and 24-42 are discussed in chapter 6. Answers to question 17 are discussed in both chapter 5 and 6.

<sup>206</sup> In the scale from 5 to 1, 5 corresponded to the most positive evaluation. The reason was that such interpretation is standard in the Polish educational system where 5 means very good and 1 means failed. This helped avoid some confusion with the values of numbers.

An important objective of quantitative research is to gain a representative sample of the community/group being investigated. This objective can be achieved with a randomly selected population sample. A key question is the sample size. Adams and Schvaneveldt commented on the sample size as follows:

Blalock (1960) indicates that in terms of statistics an  $n$  of 50 is a minimum size; Champion (1970) for the same reason notes that 30 is the very minimum, and still others call for considerably larger samples if one is to control for certain variables and lay claim that the sample accurately 'mirrors' the population. (Adams and Schvaneveldt 1985:185)

Gorard (2003:60) is of the opinion that the sample should be as big as possible within the constraints under which the researcher is operating. I decided that for my research purposes samples of 60 persons from each Estate would be sufficient.

The execution of the surveys was a major concern and difficulty. I opted for the random route (Maison and Noga-Bogomilski 2007:121-213; Zikmund 1997:426-428). 5 streets in each of the Estates were selected in which it was decided to knock at the door of every 5<sup>th</sup> flat/house. I wanted to ask the household member whose day and month of birth (not year) were the earliest to respond to my questionnaire. 100 questionnaires were delivered in each of the estates. In around 40% of households residents either refused to fill in the questionnaire or were not available (doors closed). Two weeks later I visited the households to which I delivered the questionnaires to collect them. In each of the Estates, of the 100 questionnaires I attempted to deliver originally, the percentage of completed questionnaires was 30% i.e. 50% of the planned samples (a 20% response rate is considered to be normal, cf. Bourque and Fielder 2003:16, Robbins 2007:256). 120 additional copies of the questionnaire (60 per Estate) were delivered one week later to randomly selected but centrally located local shops (one in each of the Estates). To ensure random sampling, the questionnaire was given to every 5<sup>th</sup> shopper. 50% of the questionnaires distributed in shops were completed. The target sample size of 60 for each Estate was reached. The questionnaire forms delivered to household doors and given to shoppers were collected as agreed with the respondents from their homes or from the shop. The questionnaire forms were distributed and collected at the same times in the two Estates. I did the survey in Ławica Estate and a co-worker, who was carefully instructed, did the survey in Św. Łazarz Estate. In the end 62 completed questionnaire forms were collected in Ławica Estate and 68 in Św. Łazarz Estate. Some respondents reacted positively to the information about me and my research. However for most respondents the most important piece of information was the questionnaire anonymity which increased the

respondents' willingness to cooperate. It should be stressed that the questionnaire forms returned were usually fully answered. The data obtained was subsequently coded and typed into the SPSS software the tools of which I used to analyse the data.

A random sampling approach was adopted as the most practical. Though the ability to adopt a stratified random sampling is often desirable at the time of my research no data on the population structure in the Estates was available. A random approach raises particular questions of the sample's representativeness. Over and under-representation of various age groups and people's education levels in my samples can be disputed (see Tables 4.3 and 4.6) if compared with the Polish Central Statistical Office (GUS) data, i.e. results of the last Census of 2002 (see Tables 4.2 and 4.5). The Census data, however, was not available for Poznań's Estates. However, it was available for the former city districts including the former Grunwald district where both investigated Estates are located.

Table 4.2 Population numbers in the former Grunwald district in 2002

	Former city district Grunwald	
	Population number	Percentage
18-24	16,020	15.3
25-34	18,090	17.2
35-44	16,172	15.4
45-54	19,978	19.0
55-64	11,911	11.3
65 and over	22,883	21.8
Total	105,054	100

Source: \_\_\_\_ (2005) *'Miasto Poznań w świetle wyników NSP 2002'* [City of Poznań in the light of the Census 2002], Poznań: *Główny Urząd Statystyczny (GUS)* [Central Statistical Office]

Table 4.3 Age Range

	Ławica Estate		Św. Łazarz Estate	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
18-24	16	25.8	27	39.7
25-34	10	16.1	14	20.6
35-44	1	1.6	7	10.3
45-54	21	33.9	11	16.2
55-64	9	14.5	5	7.4
65 and over	5	8.1	4	5.9
Total	62	100.0	68	100.0

Source: Questionnaire data of 2007

In the Ławica Estate sample the over-representation of residents who were 45-54 (33.9%) could be justified against the settlement's recent history. Demographically the area started growing about 20-30 years ago and people who moved there then are now 45-55 years of age while their children, who were about 10 years of age at the time, are now 25-34 years of age. Thus under-representation of the 35-44 age group was not surprising. As far as the over-representation of the 18-24 age group in my data from Św. Łazarz Estate is concerned, it might have been that as my colleague was 22 years old, she was less trusted by older people living in a densely populated area. She clearly established a better rapport with younger residents.

It was only after I had completed my survey that I gained access to the GfK Polonia<sup>207</sup> data of 2009 (Table 4.4) which confirmed that in the Ławica Estate sample the 35-44 age group was under-represented whereas in the Św. Łazarz Estate sample the 18-24 age group was over-represented.

Table 4.4 Population age groups and their percentage in population aged  $\geq 18$  (2009)

	Ławica Estate		Św. Łazarz Estate	
	Population	Percent	Population	Percent
18-24	677	14.6	3018	11.5
25-34	808	17.4	4894	18.7
35-44	640	13.8	3495	13.4
45-54	962	20.7	4857	18.5
55- 65	855	18.4	3883	14.8
65 and over	708	15.2	6023	23.0
Total	4650	100.0	26170	100.0

Source: GfK Polonia – geomarketing analyses<sup>208</sup>

As far as differences in the education level of residents are concerned, my survey confirmed the popular Poznań opinion that the level of education in Ławica Estate is higher than in Św. Łazarz Estate.

<sup>207</sup> GfK Polonia ranks third among Polish market research agencies, [http://www.gfk.pl/about\\_us/index.en.html](http://www.gfk.pl/about_us/index.en.html), accessed 12.04.2010.

<sup>208</sup> I got access to the data only after I completed my research.

Table 4.5 Education level<sup>a</sup> of residents aged  $\geq 13$  in the former Grunwald district in 2002

	Grunwald	
	Population	Percentage
Vocational and lower level School	44,395	39.5
Secondary School (including Comprehensive and Technical)	40,867	36.4
Higher Education	27,009	24.1
Total	112,271	100

Source: \_\_\_\_ (2005) '*Miasto Poznań w świetle wyników NSP 2002*' [City of Poznań in the light of the Census 2002], Poznań: *Główny Urząd Statystyczny* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office]

<sup>a</sup> without 'unknown'/'not established'

Table 4.6 Level of Education (respondents aged  $\geq 18$ )

	Ławica Estate		Św. Łazarz Estate	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Vocational and lower level School	2	3.2	20	29.4
Secondary School (including Comprehensive and Technical)	22	35.5	31	45.6
Higher Education	38	61.3	17	25.0
Total	62	100.0	68	100.0

Source: Questionnaire data of 2007

Over- and under-representation may distort the interpretation of the results. However in random sampling it can be difficult to ensure representativeness as many categories are investigated. Among factors that could have influenced the sampling was that the survey was conducted in summer time when many residents were on holiday. Lack of responses and bias resulting from the use of 'volunteers' were also relevant to the survey outcomes, as "those who are willing to devote an afternoon to taking part in your study could be very different from those who are not." (Gorard 2003:71). While analysing the data I was aware that a 'non response is non-random' (Gorard 2003:75). Nevertheless the insight gained was valuable.

I assumed the survey data would be subdivided into multiple categories to generate dependent variables and to use the crosstabulations program<sup>209</sup>. However, due to under and over-representation of some age and educational categories such a division was not always possible without some manipulation of the data. Chi-square analysis assumes that each of the observations being analysed is independent of each of the other observations. A key assumption of the test is that the lowest expected frequency in any cell should be 5 or more

<sup>209</sup> Crosstabs results though not used in the analysis are in Appendix 2.

and that caused trouble as my samples appeared to be too small. Some authors claim though that the correction for continuity should be used whenever the expected cell frequency is below 5. However, other research in statistics has shown that this practice is not advisable (see Bradley, Bradley, McGrath and Cutcomb 1979). This suggests a less stringent criteria that at least 80% of cells should have expected frequencies of 5 or more. If the frequency in a cell is lower, it is suggested to reduce the size of the correlation matrix, i.e. dimensionality reduction (reducing the number of variables by collapsing columns or rows). The formula for the Chi-square test of independence yields a statistic that is only approximately a Chi-square distribution. In order for the approximation to be adequate, the total number of subjects should be at least 20 which was met in the survey. (In the survey it was over 60 for each Estate.) To triangulate my data I referred to secondary data produced by the Polish Central Statistical Office (GUS) which was already grouped (see below).

In this study the Chi-square test of independence is used to analyse relationships. In the Chi-square test of independence, the Pearson Chi-square value is the result of a test of the null hypothesis that the variables are independent. If the value of associated significance levels (asympt. sig. (2-sided) p-value) is small (e.g. less than 0.05) then the null hypothesis can be rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis that there is indeed some level of relationship between the chosen variables. The Chi-square test was chosen because of the size of the samples and the nature of the data collected as the test allows one to examine independencies of qualitative data (degree of freedom). The question being tested was whether or not the populations were statistically independent. Variables can be found to be related but the test does not allow one to assess its strength, i.e. to say whether the relationship is statistically significant. To measure the strength of the relationship one can use Tschuprow's T, the contingency coefficient test or Cramer's V. I chose Cramer's V (for nominal variables). The range of Cramer's V is  $<0;1>$ .  $V_{xy} = 0$  if the variables are independent.  $V_{xy} = 1$  if the variables are functionally related<sup>210</sup>.

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<sup>210</sup>  $0.0 \leq V_{xy} < 0.2$  indicates no relationship, i.e. lack of dependence,  
 $0.2 \leq V_{xy} < 0.4$  indicates a weak relationship,  
 $0.4 \leq V_{xy} < 0.7$  indicates a medium strength relationship,  
 $0.7 \leq V_{xy} < 0.9$  indicates a strong relationship,  
 $0.9 \leq V_{xy} < 1.0$  indicates a perfect relationship, i.e. the variables are fully dependant on each other.

The Mann-Whitney Test was also used to compare answers given in the two samples (two Estates) to questions about the effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań and of the City Council. The two questions were Likert Scale questions. The null hypothesis in the Mann-Whitney test is that the two samples are identical, i.e. there are no differences between the populations.

The problem with the GUS data has been mentioned above. Cities are treated by the GUS as single entities. At best, annual statistics for cities provide demographical data for former city districts. The lack of ‘hard’ data on sub-city units was also noticed by Podemski (2000:361) who analysed voting patterns in the Poznań council elections and observed that “there is no ‘hard’ data which could be used to explain the differences”. Consequently a researcher’s background knowledge of the city is brought into play. Also of value is secondary data from the publication *The City of Poznań in the light of the 2002 Census* [*Miasto Poznań w świetle wyników NSP 2002*] (GUS, Poznań, 2005). Only at the last stage of the analysis was it possible to gain access to geomarketing analyses conducted by GfK Polonia<sup>211</sup> and its data on the age of residents in the two investigated Estates (Table 4.4 above). GfK analyses are more detailed as it has access to the PESEL data which is highly restricted and costly. (PESEL is the Polish Electronic System for Registration of the Population in which every Polish citizen is given his or her Personal Identification Number used since 1979). PESEL data contains information on the resident’s address. This data source – normally not accessible to academic researchers – proved invaluable in cross-checking the sample of Estates residents.

The survey carried out and results obtained can surely serve as reference data for further research<sup>212</sup>.

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<sup>211</sup> A private company carrying out public opinion polls.

<sup>212</sup> On 25 May 2007 the conference ‘*Metody Badania Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego. Jak badać działanie społeczne?*’ [Methods of Researching Civil Society. How to Investigate Social Activities?] (<http://www.pts.amu.edu.pl/Metody.pdf>, accessed 15.06.2009) was held in Poznań. Full papers have not been published but some interesting data has. Of greatest interest to me were contributions by Stempień (2007) ‘*Badanie civil society – badaniem jednostek*’ [Research on Civil Society: a research of individuals] (extended abstract); Nowosielski and Nowak (2007) ‘*Aktywność społeczna w sondażach – badania krajowe i porównawcze. Próba typologii i konstruktywnej krytyki*’ [Social Activity in Opinion Polls: research in Poland and comparative research. An attempt at typology and constructive criticism], (draft paper).



#### 4.6. Interviews

Qualitative research was conducted in the form of face-to-face semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions (English and Polish versions of the questions in Appendix 1 A:1-1; A:1-2). The objective was to learn what pre-selected individuals think about or how they interpret events and developments relevant to democratisation<sup>213</sup>. While selecting potential interviewees I made sure that their numbers would be sufficient ‘to reflect the range of participants’ (Seidman 1998:47-48). The complete list of interviewees including their functions and experience is given in Appendix 1 A:1-5. Face-to-face interviews facilitate asking supplementary questions (probes) to clarify or extend the response if needed. Equally it is possible to remind respondents of points that they have not mentioned (prompts) (Gillham 2000:14). Altogether 45 interviews were conducted normally lasting between one hour and one hour and half long together with three (additional) shorter interviews aimed at learning more about particular matters.

The interviews were with members of local ‘elites’ (*cf.* Gillham 2000:81-84; Zuckerman 2003: 373-388; Leech 2002; Aberbach and Rockman 2002; Goldstein 2002). ‘Elite’ refers here not only to the rank of an interviewee but also, if not primarily, to the interviewee’s knowledge/competence (*cf.* Gillham 2000:81)<sup>214</sup>. This approach allowed me to uncover distinctive views and perspectives, to which I could later relate information derived from the questionnaires and analysis of secondary data. In ‘elite’ interviews the interviewees often expect to have some control over what the researcher is doing (Gillham 2000:82) and the researcher must be capable of controlling the interview to gain knowledge. I accepted the situation and gained much by establishing a good rapport with the interviewees while carefully exposing my knowledge and experience<sup>215</sup>.

Prior to and concurrently with carrying out my interview research on local issues (March - August 2007) in the City of Poznań, I interviewed local government experts: Jerzy Regulski and Michał Kulesza, and researchers from the Local Government Research Group of AMU Faculty of Sociology. At that time I also interviewed administration

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<sup>213</sup> At the very early stage of my research I sent my interview questions to many potential respondents but received few responses. As Gillham wrote: “large sections of the population are not comfortable with any kind of written response. And people, as a whole, find it much easier to talk than to write, even if the writing doesn’t amount to much.” (2000:16).

<sup>214</sup> Elites in a particular institution are subjected to the same interview protocol composed of structured or semi-structured questions.

<sup>215</sup> “The interviewer should seem professional and generally knowledgeable, but less knowledgeable than the respondent on the particular topic of the interview” (Leech 2002:665).

officials at the poviát and voivodship level and an official in the Ministry of Interior and Administration to learn about the opinions of those who have been responsible for the implementation of democratic practices<sup>216</sup>. To an extent, the knowledge of these interviewees was somewhat removed from aspects of the research, nevertheless, in most cases they had a comprehensive grasp of the wider context of the issues I was investigating (cf. Gillham 2000:81). The issue of getting the breadth and depth of information was relevant also because “others in the ‘system’ may not know fully the background context of what they experience” (Gillham 2000:82).

The interview research on Poznań was conducted between March and August 2007. The fact that the interviews were conducted shortly after the 2006 local government elections and shortly before parliamentary elections was important to the context of my research as it facilitated local respondents’ reflections on their actual role and performance. The interviewees included 6 Poznań based MPs and Senators elected in the Poznań ward in 2007<sup>217</sup>. Of the 10 members of the *Sejm*, four were interviewed (2 from Civic Platform (PO); 1 from Law and Justice (PiS) and 1 from the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD)). My choice of the MPs interviewed was motivated by their actual involvement in local government. All those selected had been councillors of Poznań except for the MP representing SLD and Dzikowski (PO) who was the former *wójt* (Mayor) of the Tarnowo Podgórne Commune neighbouring Poznań. I had difficulties only with MPs representing PiS. They were reluctant to be interviewed<sup>218</sup>. The two Senators elected in the ward were interviewed. Among the individuals involved in local government whom I interviewed were the Mayor of Poznań elected by popular vote and 16 out of 37 City Councillors. I selected City Councillors taking care that members of all the main political parties were included. I also considered their local experience and chose 7 City Councillors who were at the time also Estate councillors. One of them was Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor. In addition 2 other Św. Łazarz Estate Councillors and 3 Ławica Estate Councillors were interviewed<sup>219</sup>. I made sure to include the chairpersons of the two Estate Councils and

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<sup>216</sup> I went to Warsaw to interview Professor Jerzy Regulski and the Deputy Director of Public Administration Department in the Ministry of Interior and Administration. I interviewed Professor Michał Kulesza on the phone.

<sup>217</sup> In 2007 in the Polish Parliament, the election ward covering the territory of the City of Poznań and Poznań Poviát was represented by 10 MPs in the *Sejm* (lower house): 5 from the Civic Platform (PO), 4 from Law and Justice (PiS), 1 from Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), and 2 Senators (upper house): 1 from the Civic Platform (PO) and 1 from Law and Justice (PiS).

<sup>218</sup> Of the 2 MPs from Law and Justice, the first did not respond to my request. The second asked for additional information to verify who I was.

<sup>219</sup> Ławica Estate Council has 15 councillors and Św. Łazarz Estate Council consists of 22 councillors.

members of the Council Boards. The interviews with City Councillors who were also Estate Councillors were particularly informative. Also interviewed were local City Hall Officials and representatives of two NGOs (Barka Foundation<sup>220</sup> and Sic! Foundation<sup>221</sup>) working closely with the City Hall of Poznań and local communities (Estates) to increase residents' civic awareness and to consolidate efforts to achieve common aims. Last, two journalists were interviewed from *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region Supplement. The aim of interviewing NGO activists and journalists was to cross-reference and gain additional insight into issues raised by local politicians besides learning about their possibly critical opinions on the progress of democratisation at the local level. Establishing a good rapport with local respondents helped me to reach other respondents e.g. another journalist, City Councillor or City Hall Official. In this sense the snowball sampling was productive (*cf.* Goldstein 2002:671).

All interviewees were first approached by email in which I introduced myself and kindly asked for an interview giving basic information about the purpose of the interview and the research project of which it was to be part. Only in a few cases did an initial lack of response make me call the prospective interviewees, whose response then was positive. Whenever an interviewee (8 interviewees out of 45) requested to have the questions sent prior to the interview, this was done. Each interview started with me presenting the research project and the letter of recommendation written by one of my supervisors and translated into Polish. Each interviewee was asked whether he or she would consent to being quoted or would prefer to remain anonymous. Their replies and the complete interviews were recorded with a portable digital voice recorder. Occasionally I took written notes during interviews but I focused on being responsive to the interviewee. Immediately after each interview I wrote down extensive notes about issues raised and comments offered. Those notes helped me to reflect on the course of the interview and issues which needed further clarification.

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<sup>220</sup> Barka Foundation is a non-governmental organisation. Its mission is to support social inclusion, provide opportunities for the excluded to help them integrate with society by a system of mutual help, education and entrepreneurship, in line with a citizens' society. Official name: The Barka Foundation For the Mutual Help [*Barka Fundacja Pomocy Wzajemnej*], <http://barka.org.pl/node/115>, accessed 04.07.2010.

<sup>221</sup> The SIC! Foundation and its Social Innovation Centre are civil society initiatives the goal of which is to support best solutions for social work carried by local government, associations and foundations while using the civil society potential as well as by involving business entities and educational institutions. The Centre supports advancing local social policy and co-operates with institutions of the local government and NGOs. <http://www.sic.to/indexen.php?page=4>, accessed 30.05.2009.

While designing the interview questions considerable attention was paid to their wording and sequencing to make sure that all areas of the research questions were covered<sup>222</sup>. This was also essential to establish good rapport with the interviewees. 13 open-ended questions were used within a semi-structured interview format (English and Polish versions of the questions are in Appendix 1 A:1-1; A:1-2). I was ready to listen to answers to a set of *grand tour questions*<sup>223</sup>. However while holding the interviews, I tried to follow the designed sequence of my questions starting with questions of a more general nature to ‘warm’ and open up the respondents. Occasionally it did happen that due to the flow of the interview and depth of responses, it was undesirable<sup>224</sup> to strictly follow the designed sequence. As is common among qualitative researchers my skills of interviewing improved with time and experience. The interviewees only rarely offered trivial comments. Once they did not wish to answer particular questions, alternative methods of asking the question were brought into play (compare Zuckerman 2003:385). The issue of information saturation was also highly relevant as some responses were repetitive<sup>225</sup> but each interview contributed new information e.g. some provided examples of civic activities of Estate residents. Six interviewees wanted to authorise transcripts of their interview and were sent the transcript. In such cases only the authorised versions were analysed further.

Figure 4.3 presents the different stages of how I processed the interview data starting with the transcription of the entire recorded interviews<sup>226</sup>, by a hired person. Then I checked the transcripts against the recordings. Punctuation was an issue<sup>227</sup> as punctuation marks can reflect intonation and occasionally distort the intended meaning (e.g. commas). Marking a sentence end was sometimes a challenge because Polish intonation is flat. The next phase was text reduction to select excerpts which were the most informative and interesting (inductive approach). At this stage I worked on the original transcripts, i.e. written in

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<sup>222</sup> Before designing my interview questions I did my preliminary research on Poznań (local laws, local newspapers etc.).

<sup>223</sup> “The single best question I know of for a semistructured interview is what Spradley (1979) calls a *grand tour question*. Like the name suggests, these questions ask respondents to give a verbal tour of something they know well. The major benefit of the question is that it gets respondents talking, but in a fairly focused way.” Leech (2002:667).

<sup>224</sup> “[...] a key principle of real-world research—sometimes one does something that is not the ideal (in this case, vary the order of questions) because the less than ideal approach is better than the alternative (in this case, a clumsy flow of conversation that will inhibit in-depth ruminations on the issues of interest).” (Rockman and Aberbach 2002:674).

<sup>225</sup> There is point in the research when the interviewer starts to hear the information begin reported again and again (Seidman 1998:48).

<sup>226</sup> “Preselecting parts of the tapes to transcribe and omitting others tends to lead to premature judgments about what is important and what is not.” (Seidman 1998:98).

<sup>227</sup> “Punctuating is one of the beginning points of the process of analyzing and interpreting the material.” (Seidman 1998:99, after Kvale 1996).

Polish. This phase was preceded by me reading extensively about other researchers' experience (e.g. Blauner 2003 and Seidman 1998) which helped me work out my own approach. Upon Seidman's advice (1998:108) and on the basis of my own experience of working with long texts, I performed the first reduction and categorisation, i.e. coding<sup>228</sup> on printouts (text reduction stage 1; see Figure 4.3). Every passage was carefully checked for information that could be coded alternatively. Then I started using a word processor and grouped the categories with my comments in separate files (text reduction stage 2; see Figure 4.3). Care was taken to ensure that the original texts were not distorted and that the relevant paragraphs were highlighted. Paragraphs judged relevant were to be analysed further. Original full transcripts<sup>229</sup> were archived in case I needed to refer back to them. Occasionally it did happen that I consulted not only the full transcripts but also the actual recordings to re-check the accuracy of the transcripts and to re-examine the contexts of some passages.

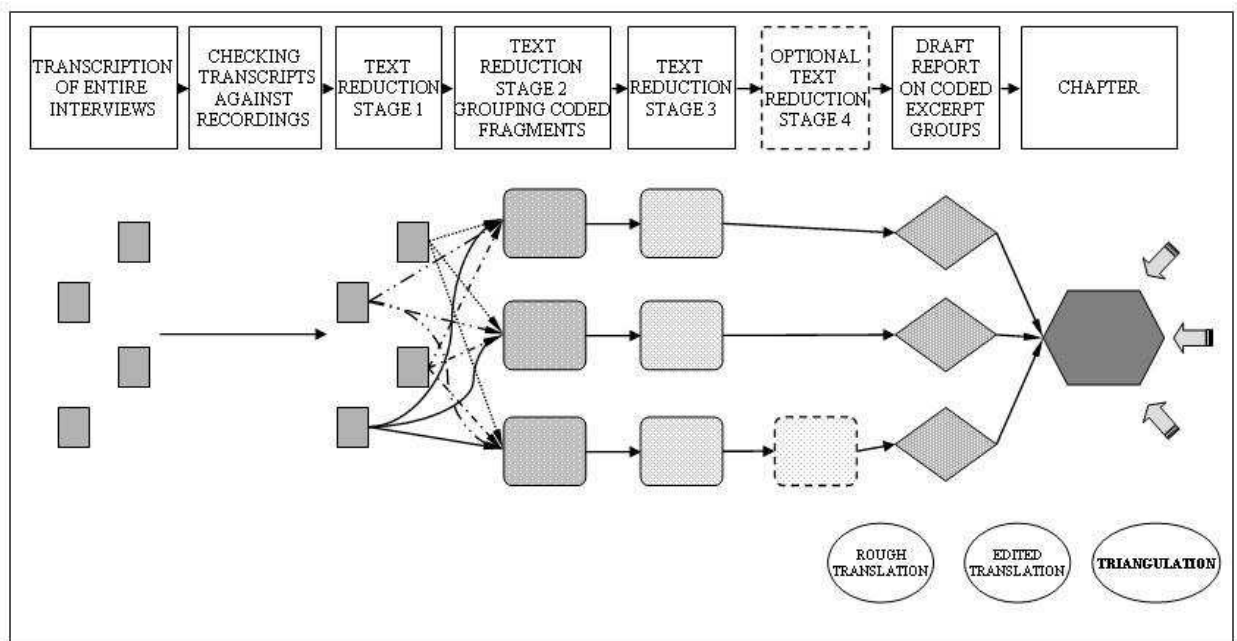
Subsequently the content of category files was reviewed and analysed. New files were created (text reduction stage 3; see Figure 4.3). Valuable passages were cut, pasted and reduced. At this stage the text reduction was not strong as the contexts of valuable passages were copied to avoid their misinterpretation and for translation purposes. While reviewing such created files I searched for connecting threads and patterns and for connections between various categories. Finding patterns was not the sole objective as in the case of 'elite' interviews "an exception, a deviation, an unusual interpretation may suggest a revision, reinterpretation, extension, a new approach" (Dexter 1970:6). If needed, the process was repeated to prune the file (text reduction stage 4; see Figure 4.3). Having completed that stage I wrote a draft report on each category. It was helpful as "[...] writing is a way of learning, a way of knowing, a form of analysis and inquiry. This is the idea of 'writing in order to work it out'." (Punch 2005:275). This stage included the translation of selected passages into English (see Figure 4.3).

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<sup>228</sup> At this stage my categories were issues raised in my interview questions.

<sup>229</sup> Interviews were held mostly in the interviewees' offices. On one occasion I was invited to an interviewee's home and in few cases I held interviews in restaurants, which was inconvenient for technical reasons (voice recording).

Figure 4.3 Stages of the processing scheme of the interview data



Working with transcripts of what Seidman (1998:104) called ‘oral speech’ is a challenge. “Some might argue that researchers should make no changes in the oral speech of their participants when presenting it to an audience as a written document.” (Seidman 1998:104). However “the claims for the realism of the oral speech are balanced by the researcher’s obligation to maintain the dignity of the participant in presenting his or her oral speech in writing.” (Seidman 1998:104). These observations were particularly relevant to my work as transcripts had to be translated from Polish into English. Translators distinguish between ‘translation’ of written texts and ‘interpreting’ of speech. Translation and interpreting are different in many respects. In short, interpreting is an act of communication which concentrates on meanings (sense) and not on words as such<sup>230</sup>. Transcripts were not translated as written texts *per se*. I was helped by a professional conference interpreter who opted for translation respecting principles of ‘interpreting’ with as little reduction as possible. Subsequently the Polish and English versions were reviewed and the English versions were edited slightly for the purpose of text reduction. The Polish versions were frequently consulted to ensure that the message of the original excerpt was not distorted in translation after pruning. Languages are part of cultures and Polish communication patterns are very different from English. As mentioned above when Poles

<sup>230</sup> It is “the interpreter’s responsibility to maintain the communication chain by re-orienting the speaker’s intentions in the manner appropriate to the listener’s language community, rather than just providing a textual translation of the original.” (Mouzourakis 2005).

communicate, they take much for granted. Polish communication abounds with implications and is much less straightforward than English. It is a high-context language while English communication is low-context<sup>231</sup>. One of the features of the Polish culture is that people commonly start answering questions with examples and only later explain what point the examples support or negate. Some of the quotations I used may appear too long but their further reduction would be risky as it could lead to distorting the message. Another translation problem was finding the referential and connotative equivalence of some Polish words. *Obywatelskość*<sup>232</sup> and *pieniactwo*<sup>233</sup> are telling examples of culture specific concepts (compare Blanc 2003). I produced a dictionary of frequently used terms and names to help myself be consistent and the reader to identify their actual content/reference. Only later was the material analysed in depth cross-referencing and cross-checking it with secondary data and applying the logic of triangulation (see Figure 4.3). The time and effort put into interpreting the data was rewarding in the lessons it generated for my role as researcher.

Cross-referencing of valuable passages in different interviews helps in reducing the number of quotes as some were 'synonymous', i.e. did not contribute anything new. I decided to quote the most straightforward passages, i.e. the ones that were more low-context. I indicated whether opinions/information quoted were shared by more respondents than the one(s) quoted. Some interviewees were not quoted as when the interviews were uninformative or their messages were very high-context.

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<sup>231</sup> In all cultures communication can be low or high-context. High-context means that "most of the information is either in the physical context or initialized in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message." (Hall 1976:79). An example of low-context communication is a conversation at the check-in at airports. Examples of high-context communication can be those between a mother and a daughter, between siblings or life partners in private situations. Some cultures are more high-context than others.

<sup>232</sup> In the totalitarian state the adjective *obywatelski* was used but it was by large associated with the noun *obywatelstwo* meaning nationality and/or citizens' obligations to the (totalitarian) state. According to the 1976 Constitution of the People's Republic of Poland, Article 3, *obywatel* was a member of a political party or a non-party member. Thus *obywatelskość* as the attribute of a *good citizen*, i.e. a responsible citizen, needed to be reintroduced and enrooted. *Obywatelskość*, i.e. *active and informed participation in public life* (informed citizenship) should, by definition, be the feature of civil society. *Obywatelskość* entails a mental, emotional and moral condition of a subject to take decisions on implementing public goals. It is citizens' readiness to accept some competences and to take decisions. Polish *obywatelskość* manifests itself with electoral turnouts, activities of NGOs and other civil society activities.

<sup>233</sup> The 'noisy' querulous malcontent [*pieniacz*] is a manifestation of a strange phenomenon called *pieniactwo* in Polish. The word means litigiousness and probably derives from *pienić*, i.e. to produce bubbles. *Pieniactwo* seems to be used now to mean noisy, disordered behaviour and refers to unjustified boosting and to disruptive and disordered adult conduct to win attention. In that sense it is 'noisy' like a background noise that distorts the message. *Pieniacz* is frequently a person who would be happy with a celebrity status achieved by diminishing the work of other people, arguing and disorientating others with unlawful behaviour. *Pieniacz* makes a fuss. *Pieniactwo* is close to English 'working yourself into a lather' taking action while being unduly upset about something or disapproving of something.

#### 4.7. Conclusions

To answer the research questions about democratic consolidation a mixed approach was considered necessary. A case study method was chosen and carried out alongside the use of interviews and questionnaires. My research required the use of a broad range of methodologies and that is why I decided to combine qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Questionnaires were useful in establishing patterns. Interviews allowed me to gain insight into current changes in the examined processes and were much more informative.

I found that micro-scale research aimed at assessing the level of democratic consolidation in a major Polish city can uncover developments which might be overlooked in comparative macro-scale research. I would not claim that I have found *the* key to analysing local democracy in CEE or in Poznań. A different approach and different methods may emphasise other results. However, I would argue that case studies have much potential and help diagnose difficulties in assessing democratic consolidation in new democracies.

Figure 4.4 Buildings in which of the Councils of Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates have their seats



Św. Łazarz Estate	Ławica Estate
<p>Matejki Street, view from Wyspiańskiego Square</p> 	<p>Rumcajsa Street</p> 



Figure 4.5 Main Streets of Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates. Photos show the different character of the two Estates.









Św. Łazarz Estate	Ławica Estate
<p>Głogowska Street</p> 	<p>Złotowska Street</p> 
	
	
	



Figure 4.6 Other examples of buildings in Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates

Św. Łazarz Estate	Ławica Estate
<p>Artura Grottgera Street</p> <p>Tenement house from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century needing renovation</p> 	<p>Sławińska Street</p> <p>Example of old rural Ławica architecture, c. early 20<sup>th</sup> Century</p> 
<p>Wyspiańskiego Square</p> <p>Renovated tenement house from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century</p> 	<p>Sławińska Street</p> <p>Buildings from the 1980s</p> 
<p>Wyspiańskiego Square</p> <p>Tenement house from the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century</p> 	<p>'Old' Miastkowska Street</p> 

Morawskiego Street

Building from before the Second World War and new building from the 2000s



'New' Miastkowska Street

Buildings from the 1990s



Bogusławskiego Street

Buildings from c. 1939



Juliana Tuwima Street

Buildings from the 1980s



Crossroads of Głogowska and Hetmańska Streets

Tall block of flats, early 1960s



Jana Brzechwy Street

'Gated' community, 2000s



## **5. Local government and local democracy in Poznań**

In chapter 3 the democratic characterisation of local government reforms in Poland after 1989 and the functioning of local authorities and local democracy were presented. For a democracy to be healthy, the actual practices of local authorities should facilitate increasing involvement of local residents in decision-making processes. This means that authorities have to be pro-active and responsive between the elections to the residents' concerns and act in the best interests of the public (compare e.g. Przeworski, Stokes and Manin 1999, Urbinati 2006, Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi 2000, Rose-Ackerman 2005). I would claim that a healthy democracy is oriented towards improvement of its practices: it has self-improving and self-reinforcing qualities. These qualities are local government's responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability (e.g. Mellor and Copperthwaite 1987, Miller, Dickson and Stoker 2000, Benett 1997, Soós 2001). In 1989 the aforementioned qualities of a healthy democracy were postulates which needed to be put into practice. Based on the experience in Poznań, this chapter examines how local government/democracy is perceived by political elites and voters and analyses how democratic are local (formal) political processes in the city in terms of the criteria identified (i.e. responsiveness, effectiveness and accountability).

The assumption is that an analysis of actual democratic practices can demonstrate if democracy is becoming consolidated or not<sup>234</sup>. However, there is no straightforward answer as to how to measure responsiveness, effectiveness<sup>235</sup> and accountability. Responsiveness appears to be both the most difficult quality to measure and the essential quality of local democracy. Effectiveness of decision-making processes and residents' satisfaction with living standards include the identification of areas that according to residents need improvement. Accountability can be discussed in reference to electoral turnouts and re-elections. Of the indicators mentioned, residents' satisfaction is likely to a good indicator of the practice of local democracy. In this chapter the experience gained by

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<sup>234</sup> If democracy is consolidated, it is enrooted, i.e. a consolidated democracy is unlikely to revert to authoritarianism.

<sup>235</sup> Effectiveness can be assessed using data on changing income per capita and scale of investment projects. This data is of limited value however since its significance is only revealed in detailed comparative studies that include detailed descriptions of the stage preceding the period analysed. Furthermore the informative value of such data is likely to increase with an informed selection of administrative units to be compared. To my knowledge such data is not available yet.

the local government of Poznań from the learning processes is the main focus. The discussion covers different forms of communication between the authorities and the public.

In the first section (5.1) attention is drawn to sub-local government level units called ‘accessory units’ of self-government which in Poznań are called Estates (see chapter 1, section 1.3, chapter 3, section 3.4 and chapter 4, subsection 4.4.1). The pattern followed in Poznań is discussed together with the reasons for choosing the system. The issue of responsiveness is taken on board and the approach taken is that responsiveness to the needs of citizens can be judged by the local authorities’ willingness to delegate some of their competencies to sub-local communities. In the second section (5.2), having in mind the issue of accountability, I discuss voting patterns in Poznań in local government elections to trace electors’ preferences in the absence of traditional established political parties. This is followed (section 5.3) with analyses of turnouts in elections in Poland, in Poznań and in the two case study Poznań Estates. In the last section (5.4) the actual responsiveness and effectiveness of Poznań local government authorities is investigated. Emphasis is put on communication between authorities and residents: its channels, patterns and quality, and on analyses of residents’ evaluation of the performance of local authorities.

### **5.1. Responsiveness I: Sub-local government level**

If responsiveness to needs can be judged by a local authorities’ willingness to delegate some of its competencies to sub-local communities, the case of the Poznań Estates is an interesting example. The local government authorities in Poznań are comprised of the City Council (legislative power) and the Mayor with the City Hall officials (executive power). It was the 1990 *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act<sup>236</sup> which gave *gminas* the right to establish ‘accessory’ self-government units that would mirror the existing subdivisions within a *gmina*. Poznań City Council has passed some of its legislative competences to Estate Councils which are sub-local government units. In this section the pattern followed in Poznań is discussed together with the reasons for choosing this system. However since big cities are a special case, first the emergence and/or enrooting of sub-local government units in rural areas with higher social cohesion will be discussed.

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<sup>236</sup> *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act (*op. cit.*), Articles 5 and 35. See chapter 3, section 3.3.



While designing the 1<sup>st</sup> tier (*gmina*), the reformers were concerned with both the size of the new basic administrative unit and the issue of social cohesion. The intent to introduce a sub-level of local government to the three tier system had also its roots in the decentralisation philosophy (*cf.* chapter 3) and the idea of societal authenticity (*cf.* Fuks 1999 in chapter 3) which was to strengthen local self-government. Professor Regulski, the chief architect of the local government reform in Poland, commented:

Today our rural and urban *gminas* are relatively large. They are bigger than the French or the Czech basic administrative units. While designing the reforms we knew that *gminas* should be relatively large because only a large 1st tier administrative unit can run a school or have a water supply company. Thus in Poland even rural *gminas* have around 6,000 inhabitants. Within villages there are strong societal bonds and a rural *gmina* can comprise several villages, sometimes close to 20 villages. (Regulski, local government expert, Interview 2007)

Societal bonds are strongest in the smallest traditional communities, mostly villages. Furthermore, villages have had a long tradition of the elected village leader (*sołtys*) who heads a village or several small villages. The *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act did not threaten the tradition of this function which was to be continued. It reinforced it. In 1990 not all rural communities which had a tradition of self-government met the criteria for becoming a *gmina*. These were the first to be recognised as sub-local government units, i.e. rural *sołectwo*.

Some villages have charters dating back to the Polish kingdom and so they have had to have some rights. The best known example is the privilege to graze cattle on public grassy land in Kraków granted to the then neighbouring village by a king. [...] The *sołtys* [leader of a village(s)/parish leader] has been a long established function. The leaders were there and their function should not have been destroyed. With time they have been assigned more competencies and thus given more options to act than in the 1990 *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act. They have been granted immunity and a right to receive a small allowance. Today there are tens of thousands of *sołectwos*. A small village headed by its *sołtys* publishes its own newspaper. There are also unions of *sołectwos* that are very active and effective. (Regulski, local government expert, Interview 2007)

The *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act of 1990 does not impose an obligation to create sub-local government units. Sociologist Matczak underlined that:

Poland is a diversified country. This can be observed when we look at *sołectwos*. In some regions they are smaller and in some larger. The differences are partly linked to historic differences among regions. The functioning of municipal communities also differs. [...] Surely the communist system levelled many differences both in particular countries and in the Soviet bloc, but some differences remained. In Poland,

the Act allowed for creating sub-local units where needed. (Dr Matczak, AMU, Department of Sociology, Local Government Research Group, Interview 2007)

Provisions for establishing sub-local government units secured space for them.

I think this has been another outcome of the widely understood democratisation. Even the *sołectwo* has been assigned some tasks. Is that bad? Professor Regulski and others should be praised for having achieved so much in the early phase of the transformation. They introduced many institutions and tools necessary for the democratisation and activation of local rural communities. (Mikołajczak, Deputy Director, Public Administration Department, Ministry of Interior and Administration, Interview 2007)

‘Accessory’ sub-local government units can be established anywhere provided that the Council of a relevant *gmina* or another administrative unit with *gmina* competences approves of their establishment. They can be established in big cities too. ‘Accessory units’ are self-governing but they do not have the status of a ‘legal entity’<sup>237</sup>. This decision was explained by Regulski:

If we granted them the legal entity status, then the *gmina* would cease to be the basic unit of administration. It is the *gmina* that has to be in charge. (Regulski, local government expert, Interview 2007)

The status of sub-local government units has been a sensitive issue as “What the actual role of a sub-local government unit is, is up to the *gmina*.” (Dr Matczak, AMU, Department of Sociology, Local Government Research Group, Interview 2007). The status of ‘accessory units’ is based on the subsidiarity principle and is a sensitive issue because it is regulated further only with local (*gmina*) Acts. In 2006 Matczak observed that there is very limited data on sub-local government units in Poland. Nevertheless, his opinion is that Poznań is representative of cities where ‘accessory units’ have been established on residents’ initiatives (Matczak 2006:150, after Wiatr Raciborski, Bartkowski, Frarczak-Rudnicka and Kilias 2003).

The principles for establishing Estates within the City of Poznań are laid down in the Poznań City Charter, Articles 37 – 48. Article 37, Point 4 reads that “The Estate area shall be coherent both in territorial and functional terms, as well as historical, where possible”. This means that the social cohesion of Estates was considered relevant from the very beginning. The division of the city into Estates<sup>238</sup> is based on residents’ identification with

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<sup>237</sup> i.e. they are not a ‘juristic person’ (in Scots law).

<sup>238</sup> Estates are units of self-government not housing estates.

the area where they live and the local community and is voluntary. The initiative to establish the Estate must be supported by at least 10% of electors. The emergence of an Estate requires residents to organise themselves as a group, i.e. a community, and to elect its authorities<sup>239</sup>. (The concept of Estates as cohesive self-governing units is discussed further in chapter 6.)

The reason why in Poznań the decision was taken not to impose any administrative division of the city was rooted in the socio-political situation in 1990. The democratic changes freed the energy within Poznań society that needed to be consumed. This was pointed out by Pudliszak, Director of National Election Office - Voivodship Office in Poznań and City:

In Poznań the support for the Estates' idea goes back to the first elections (1990). At the time there were many<sup>240</sup> people who wanted to be City councillors and were not elected as only 60 councillors could be chosen in a city of 600,000 population. We wanted to offer an alternative for the active ones, an option for local initiatives to grow. We truly wanted to build self-government and were fully aware that we inherited the legacy of an autocratic system. We wanted to give an additional stimulus to local communities pointing them to a further option of self-governance. (Pudliszak, Director of National Election Office - Voivodship Office in Poznań, Interview 2007)

Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Grobelny, the Mayor of Poznań<sup>241</sup>, and City Councillor Kręglewski<sup>242</sup> had similar recollections of the motivation for establishing Estates with their Councils. This points to both a democratic reasoning in the 1990s and the recognition of a huge civil society potential in Poznań in the early 1990s. In 1990, like today, residents would act together around a shared objective (see chapter 2,

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<sup>239</sup> Estate Councillors elect or appoint the Council Chairperson and Board members. If a community decides for the General Assembly option, the Assembly elects the Board members. See also chapter 1, section 1.3.

<sup>240</sup> The number of people running in elections to the City Council in Poznań in 1990 was 414. In the following elections it was 539 in 1994, 512 in 1998, 698 in 2002 and 656 in 2006. See: \_\_\_, *'Liczba Kandydatów do RMP w latach 1990-2006'* [Number of candidates to the Council of the City of Poznań in 1990-2006], *City Hall of Poznań, Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/bm/documents.html?parent=6158&instance=1064&lang=pl>, attachment: Table 7: LICZBA KANDYDATÓW DO RMP W LATACH 1990-2006.RTF, accessed 21.01.2010.

<sup>241</sup> "The roots of the Estates were in Civic [Citizens'] Committees [1990 elections] because in Poznań there were many of them and thus out of their activities the idea was born that bodies acting like the committees could become part of the city structure." (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007).

<sup>242</sup> "At the time we, that is residents of the now Junikowo Estate, happened to be striving to have telephone cables laid in our area. As many residents were involved, we asked all residents to sign a motion to create an Estate there. At the time it seemed everything possible was done to make people active. [...] We were afraid that people would strongly object to any units imposed from the top." (City Councillor Kręglewski, Interview 2007).



section 2.2). At the same time the fact that in some places within Poznań there have been no initiatives<sup>243</sup> was noticed:

Societal atomisation was an issue as well. In 1990, society lacked cohesion [...]. Self-governance has had to be built step by step. In places where there are no initiatives, it does not make sense to “create” Estates. A need to be recognised has not been born yet. (Pudliszak, Director of National Election Office - Voivodship Office in Poznań, Interview 2007)

In 1990 societal atomisation was countered with encouragement given to voluntary membership in small communities. As Geremek put it:

The magic of the word ‘citizen’, in Poland or in Czechoslovakia, came from the widespread sense that it referred less to one's subordination to the state and its laws than to one's membership in an authentic community, a community whose essence was summed up in the term ‘civil society’. (Geremek 1991)

The Poznań City Council of 1990 thought that:

[...] imposing ‘a solution’<sup>244</sup> from the top would inhibit the natural desire of the man to live in civil society. [...] I think that that our thinking in terms of civil society and consequently giving local residents the right to self-govern was very good. (City Councillor Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007)

The implementation of sub-level units was crucial to the prolongation and extension of social activation in a more institutionalised form. Estates born out of civil society's initiatives are symptomatic of a democratic philosophy.

The devolution process was extended beyond the level of the *gmina* and something like the *gmina* but with much less tasks was designed. This was a sensible solution [...] (Dr Matczak, AMU Department of Sociology, Local Government Research Group, Interview 2007)

None of my interviewees criticised the very division of Poznań into Estates. In 2006 Matczak (2006:150) reported that Poznań is assessed to be the city where the Estates function well in comparison to other cities. Thus decentralisation processes which were fostered with “New legislation aimed at opening the space for local activity and creativity.” (Matczak 2006:147) and advanced in Poznań with the emergence of Estates.

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<sup>243</sup> “The assumption has been that it is worth establishing an accessory local government unit only there where local residents want it. And if they do not want it, there would be none.” (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007).

<sup>244</sup> i.e. the option to impose the administrative division of the City into e.g. districts.

A Poznań City Hall publication, based on data from 2005 and 2006, states that the City sub-local government units play an important part within the structure of Poznań as they are a vital element of civic activity.

In Poznań we have been implementing our programme of civic activism that aims at increasing the involvement of citizens in public life, their civic awareness, and at increasing the importance of the role and effectiveness of civic institutions. It is in the framework of this programme that active groups of residents, local authorities and NGOs cooperate on solving actual local problems. [...] Residents organise themselves in the form of Estates that are ‘accessory units’ which can be established only out of the initiative of a local community. Estates take care of fulfilling common local needs, in particular of the spatial order, safety, local technical infrastructure, condition of green areas and environment in general, municipal properties within the Estate area, the range of services available, and cultural, leisure and sports activities in the Estate. (City of Poznań<sup>245</sup>, p.37) [trans. OM]

Estates are ‘accessory’ in the sense that their Councils focus on the needs of sub-local communities within the municipality. Established in response to residents’ initiatives, Estates may increase the responsiveness of the authorities of the City of Poznań. As there are 68 Estates in Poznań and they cover over 86%<sup>246</sup> of the City area, the space for local activity and creativity ensured with the local government’s decision to allow for establishing Estates has been used by local communities. As the City Council of Poznań has delegated some of its tasks to Estate Councils, this pattern speaks for devolution.

## 5.2. Accountability I: Local government composition and the political scene

Residents’ control over the authorities results in the residents’ actual evaluation of the authorities’ *accountability* (cf. Soós 2001:202). For local authorities and local communities the exercising of local democracy is ‘a school’ of civil participation and shared responsibility in governing the area they live in and for which they are responsible. In the 1990s, all parties were new except for SLD and PSL<sup>247</sup> which have survived from the communist period till today. The first decade of the reborn Polish democracy was marked

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<sup>245</sup> \_\_\_\_, ‘*Diagnoza: Sytuacja społeczno-gospodarcza Miasta Poznania*’ [Diagnosis: socio-economic condition of the City of Poznań], *City Hall of Poznań, Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide],

<http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/s8a/documents.html?co=print&id=1743&parent=111&instance=1011&lang=pl&lhs=s8a&rhs=null>, accessed 18.03. 2009. Date of publication not given.

<sup>246</sup> Data based on materials from Poznań City Hall: \_\_\_\_ (2007) ‘*Zestawienie danych dotyczących Osiedli w Poznaniu (aktualizacja 30.01.2007 - 68 osiedli)*’ [Compilation of data on Estates in Poznań (actualization 20.01.2007 - 68 estates)], Department Supporting the City Accessory Units, City Hall of Poznań.

<sup>247</sup> Of political parties of the communist period, 2 survived and have been active: agrarian PSL [Polish Peasant Party] and PZPR [Polish United Workers’ Party]. The latter was renamed SLD [Democratic Left Alliance]. The third party, i.e. Democratic Party has been unsuccessful.

with a highly turbulent political scene at the national level. One of the features of that period were continuous changes in the party affiliation of democratic activists. In this section voting patterns in Poznań are discussed to trace electors' preferences in the absence of traditional established political parties. The persistent lack of such parties between 1990 – 2000 in particular, is the starting point of an analysis of the last local elections in Poznań in 2006 in section 5.3. below.

The outcomes of the national elections in 1989-1993 in Poznań differed from results in other places in Poland. Residents of Poznań strongly supported Solidarity voting for its candidates, i.e. candidates of Citizens' Committees and later of the Freedom Union<sup>248</sup>. In 1993 sociologist Podemski commented upon the outcomes as follows:

In the light of the parliamentary election results on the 19 September [1993] it shows that Poznań and Poznańskie [former Voivodship, now mostly the Wielkopolskie Voivodship] are definitely more orientated towards the political centre than other regions. [...] The results confirm the prevalence of a centrist, liberal-democratic orientation as well as a leftist, social-democratic orientation among electors in western Poland and a much weaker support for agrarian and nationalist-Christian political parties [...] and populist parties in comparison with electoral preferences in other parts of Poland. In 1989 and 1991 two western voivodships - Poznańskie and Szczecińskie<sup>249</sup> were strongholds of T. Mazowiecki<sup>250</sup> and later of the Freedom Union. (Podemski 1993:383-4) [trans. OM]

Podemski (1993) offered the following interpretation of the choices made by the people of Poznań (and the Wielkopolskie Voivodship) in the context of national election outcomes between 1989-1993:

Regional characteristics of electors, their cultural, historic and economic conditioning have been frequently described. It does not mean however that an explanation has been offered that would go beyond the stereotypes of the Posnanian and the Wielkopolanian [local identity]. What is clear is that there is a relationship between the marked advantage of political parties that emphasise the importance of the free market economy, the relatively higher affluence of the inhabitants of the area and the higher living standards there. (Podemski 1993:383-4) [trans. OM]

Similarly Zarycki (1999a) in his analysis of electoral cleavages in Poland comes to the conclusion that Poznań and the Wielkopolskie Voivodship are more liberal, better educated and secular i.e. not as conservative and not as strongly Catholic as elsewhere in the

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<sup>248</sup> Freedom Union: *Unia Wolności*: former dissidents' party that by large emerged from Citizens' Committees.

<sup>249</sup> Szczecińskie – now roughly Zachodniopomorskie Voivodship.

<sup>250</sup> Tadeusz Mazowiecki was the first Prime Minister after 1989 and a leading dissident.

country. Their observations can contribute to understanding the prevalence of a centrist, liberal-democratic orientation among local electors who wished to self-govern.

The outcomes of the 1990 local elections in Poznań were similar. The newly elected City Council consisted of 65 councillors including 64 councillors supported by the Solidarity led Citizens' Committees and 1 of a new rightist political party the Confederation for an Independent Poland<sup>251</sup>. It was Solidarity's endorsement of candidates that legitimized 64 of them in the eyes of electors. After the second local elections (1994) the council's composition changed slightly. In addition to 46 candidates supported by local Citizens' Committees, 1 member of a new democratic political party and 17 members of the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance<sup>252</sup> were elected<sup>253</sup>. Characteristically 'self-governing' or 'self-governed' was in the name of all local groups the candidates of which became elected.

If electors' votes in the 1990 local elections were a vote of trust in Solidarity and the results of 1994 local elections in Poznań reflected both the politicisation and the community's invested trust in local people (emergence of Citizens' Committees, see above), the results of the next elections were either a manifestation of disapproval of the transformation outcomes or a reflection of a search for the lost identity of the old Solidarity movement or perhaps plainly a reflection of the institutionalisation of the party system pointing to the consolidation of democracy. It was in 1998 when the well organised post-communist party threatened new parties which were inexperienced. At the same time citizen's committees vanished. The Solidarity's Action for the Elections tried to act as a political party and an umbrella for citizens' committees. Following the 1998 local elections the council consisted of 25 councillors from the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance, 24 from the Solidarity Action for the Elections and 16 from the Freedom Union. In the third term the Council was chaired by a councillor from the Solidarity Action for Elections though the Action came second in the elections. It was so because councillors from the Solidarity Action for Elections formed a coalition with councillors from the post-dissident

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<sup>251</sup> Confederation for an Independent Poland: *Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej*.

<sup>252</sup> Registered as SLD in 1999.

<sup>253</sup> In 1994, 28 councillors were candidates of the *Samorządna Wielkopolska – Poznań* [Self-governed Wielkopolska – Poznań] Citizens' Committee, 17 of Democratic Left Alliance (post-communist party), 17 of the *Samorządne Osiedla* [Self-Governed Estates] Citizens' Committee, 1 of the *Labour Union* [a new political party], and 1 of the *Unia Samorządnych Wielkopolan* [Alliance of Self-Governing Wielkopolska Citizens]. At the time there was an attempt at establishing a local party and the Alliance of Self-Governing Wielkopolska Citizens was born but short-lived.

Freedom Union. The situation of the City Council during the third term was highly unstable for many reasons. Lipiński, Chairperson of the Council in 1998-2002, pointed to the introduction of the 1998 Administrative Reform which introduced the three tier system of local government and changed the administrative status of Poznań<sup>254</sup>. The changes were widely debated and the 1998 Act was amended many times:

The Administrative Reform since its introduction by Buzek's government<sup>255</sup> till 2002 was amended as many as 12 times that is every 15 weeks on average! The 1990 Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government identified 16 tasks for local (*gmina*) governments. The 2002 Act identified as many as 20 tasks (25% increase). And it was at that time that the city authorities had to take over also other tasks that followed from the city becoming a municipal *powiat* in addition to being a *gmina*. There were new tasks and insufficient financial means. (Lipiński 2003:441) [trans. OM]

He also drew attention to the worsening economic situation in Poland and 'the Council's internal troubles', namely that the number of Poznań councillors was twice reduced (from 65 to 37 in 2002) due to changes in national law<sup>256</sup>.

However, Drobczyński (2002) observes that since the early times of the transformation, in Poznań the local elite has been effective and accountable as the re-election of active City Councillors demonstrates<sup>257</sup>. In 1994, 26% of councillors were re-elected and 41.4% in 1998 (17 and 27 councillors respectively out of 65). Between 1990 and 2002, 10 councillors were twice re-elected. Re-election of City Councillors is for Drobczyński a manifestation of "the maturity of electors" and of the existence of a strong political elite in power.

In 2001 the parliamentary elections were won by the coalition of the Democratic Left Alliance and leftist Labour Union<sup>258</sup>. Events of 1998 – 2001 including the victory of the leftist coalition were conducive to the emergence of a new centrist liberal party – Civic Platform and a new conservative party – Law and Justice both founded in 2001. Civic Platform was largely joined by former members of the Solidarity Action for the Elections and some members of the Freedom Union. Civic Platform is a liberal-conservative party

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<sup>254</sup> Later Lipiński also refers to the 2002 Reform which introduced direct elections of Mayors.

<sup>255</sup> Jerzy Buzek, Prime Minister 1997-2001, the Solidarity Action for Elections in parliamentary coalition with the Freedom Union until 2000.

<sup>256</sup> There was also much uncertainty increased with the long unknown date of the next elections.

<sup>257</sup> Data based on the information from: *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], 'Wyborcze statystyki i porównania', [Elections' statistics and comparisons] <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/bm/documents.html?instance=1064&parent=6098&lang=pl>, accessed 12.07.2010.

<sup>258</sup> *Unia Pracy* established in 1992.

and a Christian democratic one, i.e. centrist liberal, whereas Law and Justice is labelled 'conservative' but is founded on socialist economic thought, anti-liberalism and Euro-scepticism. Consequently Law and Justice is a conservative party in the Polish context. This means that in terms of economic policy it is positioned on the socialist left but with regard to moral social issues it is both Catholic and rightist. After the 2002 local elections, the Council of the City of Poznań consisted of 10 councillors from the Democratic Left Alliance, 9 from Civic Platform, 9 from Law and Justice and 9 independent [i.e. having no political party affiliation] councillors<sup>259</sup>. In the 2002 local elections in Poznań the Democratic Left Alliance won but Civic Platform and Law and Justice formed an alliance and had majority in the Council.

Following the 2006 local elections in Poznań, the composition of the 37-seat council has been as follows: 19 members of Civic Platform<sup>260</sup>, 10 members of Law and Justice<sup>261</sup>, 5 councillors from the Democratic Left Alliance and 3 independent councillors. The results of the 2006 election of councillors in Poznań proved that Poznań strongly supports the centrist liberal Civic Platform.

Between 1989 and 2001 (2002) in the absence of traditional established political parties, Poznań's electors made decisions that were not strongly dependant on the political affiliation of candidates. They supported pro-democratic (liberal) candidates and not authoritarian personalities. The liberal orientation of Poznań residents showed both in parliamentary and local council elections held so far since 1989. Regular re-election of around one quarter of Poznań's councillors from 1990-2006 speaks for the exercise of informed choices by electors<sup>262</sup>. Since 2002 Poznań has been perceived as 'a city of Civic Platform'<sup>263</sup> which is seen as one feature typifying the differences between western and

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<sup>259</sup> The National Election Commission [*Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza*], 'Wybory do rady miasta na prawach powiatu 2002: wyniki głosowania i wyniki wyborów Miasto Poznań, Województwo Wielkopolskie', [Elections to the Council of the city with the poviatus status 2002. Results of voting and final results. City of Poznań, Wielkopolskie Voivodship], <http://wybory2002.pkw.gov.pl/grada/gw1/w30/m3064.html>, accessed 12.07.2010.

<sup>260</sup> 39.91% of votes plus 0.87% of votes won by the agrarian Polish Peasants' Party.

<sup>261</sup> 21.66% plus 1.30% votes won by the League of Polish Families and 0.92% won by the Union for Real Politics.

<sup>262</sup> The liberal orientation is to be understood as support for a free market economy, entrepreneurship and secularism.

<sup>263</sup> Since 1990 the City Council of Poznań has been chaired by councillors who are now members of Civic Platform, i.e. Senator Rokitnicka (1990-1998), Dariusz Lipiński MP (1998-2002), and Councillor Ryszard Ganowicz (2005-present). The exception were the years 2002-2005 when it was chaired by Przemysław Alexandrowicz (MP, between 2005-2007, Law and Justice, not re-elected). Between 2002-2005 the Vice-Chairman was City Councillor Ganowicz. The fact that despite the winning of local elections by the

eastern Poland that were emergent between 1772 and 1918<sup>264</sup>. Nowadays the differences still manifest themselves in various ways. One is that residents of Poznań tend to be more liberal in their outlook than 'conservative' (compare Cześniak 2007, Zarycki 1999a).

### **5.3. Accountability II: Representative democracy**

Healthy representative democracy is largely about having a choice and making it. The consolidation or embedding of representative democracy can be further assessed on the basis of electoral turnouts (representative democracy). It is assumed that the liberal orientation of electors in Poznań might have an impact on their turnouts in elections. Therefore, in this section the focus is on turnouts. The data on turnouts is assumed to be relevant to analyses of the practice and evaluation of the strength of democracy. First the data on turnouts in national elections in Poland and Poznań is presented (5.3.1), then a comparison of turnouts in local government (Council and Mayor) elections in Poland and Poznań is offered (5.3.2). This is followed by further investigation of the accountability issue based upon my questionnaire data from Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates (5.3.3). Finally, issues related to the Estate Council elections (turnout) in Poznań are analysed (5.3.4).

#### **5.3.1. National elections: local turnouts' comparison**

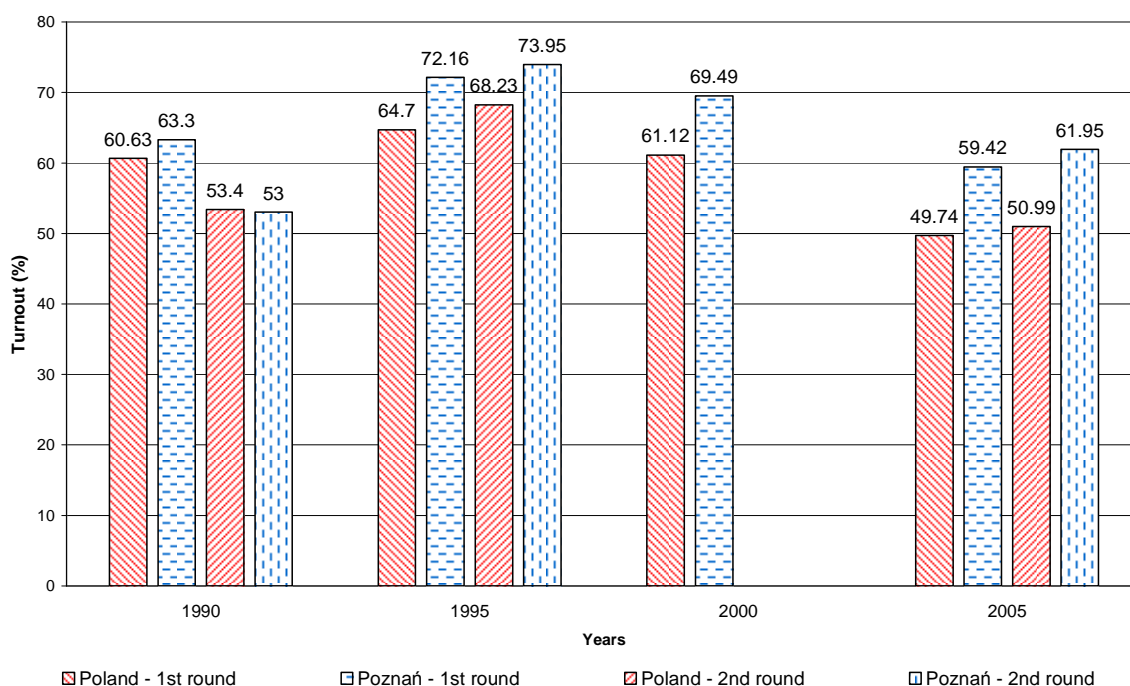
Low turnouts are assumed to be indicative of weak democracy in CEE countries thus may be also indicative of low accountability of governments (see chapter 2, subsection 2.2.2). In this section a comparative analysis of turnouts in national elections in Poznań and Poland is offered and commented upon in an attempt to find out what conditions turnout figures.

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Democratic Left Alliance in 1997 and in 2002 the Council was chaired by councillors from either the Solidarity Action for Elections (Citizens' Committees) or political parties, which emerged from Solidarity should be noticed.

<sup>264</sup> The historical reasons of this division are rooted in the period of the partitions of Poland among the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and the Habsburg Austrian Empire that started in 1772 and were completed in 1795. The partitioning powers had different policies which resulted in the western part having been much more developed economically than the eastern part. Poland regained independence in 1918. In 1918 the three parts of the reborn Poland had different political, economic and judicial systems and different traditions.

Figure 5.1 Turnout (%) in national presidential elections (first and second rounds) in Poznań and Poland between 1990-2005<sup>265</sup>



NOTE: In 2000 there was only one round as one of the candidates (Kwaśniewski) got more than 50% of votes in the first round.

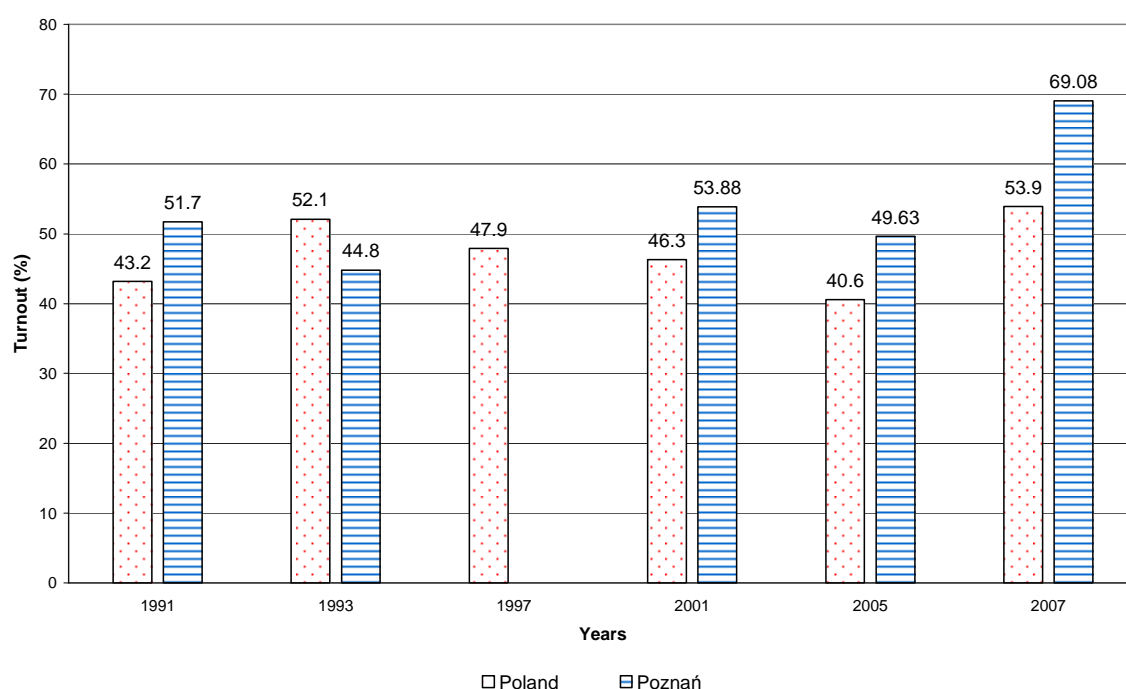
Source: Data collected by the author from various official sources mainly The National Election Commission and the *Chronicle of the City of Poznań*<sup>266</sup>

<sup>265</sup> The 2005 presidential elections were won by Lech Kaczyński from Law and Justice but in Poznań the presidential candidate Donald Tusk (Civic Platform) won the highest percentage of the vote. In the 2010 presidential elections the national turnout was 54.54% (1<sup>st</sup> round) and 55.32% (2<sup>nd</sup> round) while in Poznań the turnout was 65.47% (1<sup>st</sup> round) and 63.20% (2<sup>nd</sup> round). Komorowski from Civic Platform was elected. In Poznań, 72.31% of votes cast were for Komorowski. The national vote for Komorowski was 53.01%.

<sup>266</sup> The problem is that the most reliable source, i.e. The National Election Commission [*Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza*] presents its data in different formats for different years. This makes the research process more complicated. Detailed data for the presidential election with a geographical visualisation of the results are available online only for the elections in 2005 and 2010. The National Election Commission [*Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza*], 'Wybory prezydenta' [Presidential Elections], [http://www.pkw.gov.pl/pkw2/index.jsp?place=Menu01&news\\_cat\\_id=21&layout=1](http://www.pkw.gov.pl/pkw2/index.jsp?place=Menu01&news_cat_id=21&layout=1), accessed 23.05.2009. Detailed data for the parliamentary elections with a geographical visualisation of the results are available online only for the elections in 2001, 2005 and 2007. The National Election Commission [*Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza*], 'Wybory Sejm, Senat' [Parliamentary Elections], [http://www.pkw.gov.pl/pkw2/index.jsp?place=Menu01&news\\_cat\\_id=22&layout=1](http://www.pkw.gov.pl/pkw2/index.jsp?place=Menu01&news_cat_id=22&layout=1), accessed 23.05.2009. Detailed data for the local government elections with a geographical visualisation of the results are available online only for the elections in 1998, 2002 and 2006. The National Election Commission [*Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza*], 'Wybory samorządowe i referenda lokalne' [Local government elections and local referenda], [http://www.pkw.gov.pl/pkw2/index.jsp?place=Menu01&news\\_cat\\_id=24&layout=1](http://www.pkw.gov.pl/pkw2/index.jsp?place=Menu01&news_cat_id=24&layout=1), accessed 23.05.2009. However, the real problem was to find turnout results at the local level. Most useful were my analyses of articles in the *Chronicle of the City of Poznań*, especially articles by Professor Krzysztof Podemski (sociologist from Adam Mickiewicz University).



Figure 5.2 Turnout (%) in the national parliamentary elections in Poznań and Poland between 1990 and 2007



NOTE: Data on the turnout in the local elections in Poznań in 1997 is not available.

Source: Data collected by the author from various official sources mainly The National Election Commission and the *Chronicle of the City of Poznań*

The participation of Posnanians in national elections at the national level, i.e. presidential (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> round) (Figure 5.1) and parliamentary elections (Figure 5.2), apart from two cases, was much higher than the national turnout. The difference grows steadily since 1990 which is likely to be indicative of Posnanians' increasingly using the democratic tools of control over authorities.

In presidential elections only in the second round in 1990 the turnout in Poznań was lower, but only by the small margin of 0.4%. The situation in 1990 can be explained by the fact that in the first round Posnanians voted for Tadeusz Mazowiecki (then the Prime Minister from Solidarity who - as a result of the 'war at the top' - was then an independent candidate<sup>267</sup>). Mazowiecki did not go through to the second round and dissatisfaction could make some Posnanian electors abstain from voting in the second round<sup>268</sup>. The slightly below average turnout in Poznań in the second round was likely due to them having no positive choice.

<sup>267</sup> Later he co-founded the Freedom Union (1991) and the Democratic Party (2005).

<sup>268</sup> Still the electoral mobilisation was quite strong as many wanted to eliminate the unknown second candidate - Tymiąski. In the second round Wałęsa won.

The second time when the turnout in Poznań was lower than in Poland was in the 1993 parliamentary elections. In Poznań it was lower by 7.3%. This can be explained by two factors. The lower turnout in Poznań can be attributed to both general dissatisfaction with the economic hardships of the transformation process and particularly strong dissatisfaction with the political scene<sup>269</sup>. The second factor reflects a mismatch of the prevailing political orientation in Poznań and national developments. The 1993 parliamentary elections were won by the Democratic Left Alliance (20.41% votes in Poland). Second was the agrarian Polish Peasant Party (15.40%) which formed a governmental coalition with the Democratic Left Alliance. The two parties that formed a coalition had their traditions contrary to other parties. The Democratic Union (10.59%) came third, and the Labour Union (7.28%) was fourth. The citizens of Poznań elected as their MPs 5 members of the Democratic Union, 4 members of the Democratic Left Alliance, 3 members of the Labour Union and 2 members of the Polish Peasant Party. This shows that the preferences of Posnanians differed from the national results. The instability of the political scene including the passed vote of no confidence for Prime Minister Suchocka increased the disappointment of Posnanians. In Poznań the continuing strong support for Suchocka (Democratic Union) manifested itself despite the low turnout, as 109,000 votes were cast for her by residents of Poznań in the 1993 parliamentary elections. It was the highest number of votes a candidate in parliamentary elections has ever won in the Poznań ward.

If Posnanians have a choice, their participation in national elections is around 10% higher than the average for Poland. Their turnout was also around 10% higher in the referendum on joining the European Union in 2003 (turnout in Poznań: 69%; in the Wielkopolskie Voivodship: 61% and in Poland: 59%). The same situation occurred in 2004 in the elections to the European Parliament, where the turnout in Poznań was 31% against 21% in the Wielkopolskie Voivodship and 21% in Poland. In the 2009 elections the turnout in Poznań was 37.64% against 24.53% in Poland.

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<sup>269</sup> Between 1990-1993 there was much political turmoil on the national arena: in 4 years there were 4 Prime Ministers and 4 central governments. In the 1991 parliamentary elections there was no electoral threshold for political parties to enter parliament. The political scene was highly fragmented with 27 parties present in the parliament in 1991 and 40 political 'groups' before the elections in 1993. The governing coalition of non-post-communist 'parties' was ineffective and due to votes of no confidence Prime Minister Olszewski and later Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka (from Poznań) had to resign in June 1992 and October 1993 respectively. In 1993 there was nation-wide disappointment with the reality of the democratic system due to the hard economic reforms, rocketing unemployment rates and mistrust towards the turbulent developments on the political scene which in effect led in 1993 to the actual decomposition of the Solidarity movement whose members between 1990-1993 dominated the Parliament and formed the central government.

The differences in turnout point to both the steady liberal-democratic political preferences of the residents of Poznań and to their relatively higher involvement in exercising the democratic tools of elections compared with the Polish national average. Changes in turnout percentages in Poznań can be attributed to changes in the national political arena (1990 and 1993). In Poznań turnouts are higher if a candidate running in the elections has a liberal-democratic orientation. Posnanians tend to abstain if they have no choice that is close to their centrist, liberal-democratic orientation. Thus, turnout percentages point to informed choices made by electors in Poznań. Informed choices, in turn, are a product of an established democracy. Informed choices point to electors' increasingly practicing their controlling function.

On the whole, in Poland between 1990-2007 turnouts in national presidential elections oscillated between 68.23% (1995) and 49.74% (2005) and in national parliamentary elections they oscillated between 40.6% (2005) and 53.9% (2007). For Poland a trend has not been identified which is likely to be due to the instability on the national political scene.

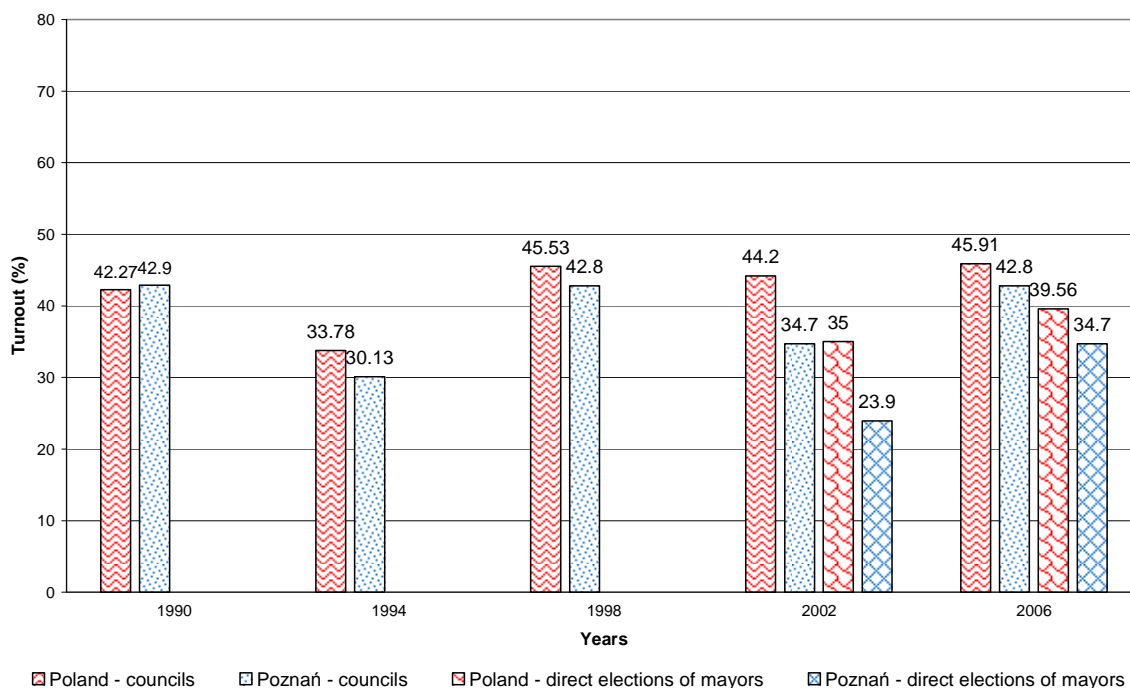
### **5.3.2. Local elections: turnouts**

In this section the turnouts in local government elections in Poznań are compared against national turnout results to give further insight into the practice of local democracy in Poznań. First, turnouts in the City Council elections in Poland and Poznań are discussed and an attempt made at explaining the apparently low turnout percentages. Later the results of the 2002 and 2006 direct elections of the Mayor of Poznań are debated with the objective to discover electors' motivations for choosing a candidate.

In Poland the interest of electors in local Council elections is on average 5% lower than in national parliamentary elections. While the average national turnout in parliamentary elections between 1990 and 2007 was 47.33%. The average turnout in local government (Council) elections in Poland between 1990-2006 (5 voting terms) was 42.34% with two higher instances in 1998 (45.53%) and 2006 (45.91%). In Poznań the turnout percentages were slightly lower than in Poland except for the first elections in 1990 (see Figure 5.3). These percentages, however, are not fully informative as average national turnouts do not distinguish among different population sizes of administrative territorial units. Zarycki's (1999b:48) analysis of the 1998 local elections demonstrates that turnouts were highest in *gminas* with populations below 20,000 (49.5%) and in rural *poviats* (47.8%). Turnouts

were lowest in cities with urban powiat status. The average for big cities was 39.8%. In Poznań the turnout was 42.8%, i.e. above the average for big cities.

Figure 5.3 Turnout (%) in the local government elections (Councils and second round of Mayors elections) in Poznań and Poland between 1990-2006



NOTE: Direct elections of Mayors in Poland and Poznań: 2002 and 2006 data for the second round.

Source: Data collected by the author from various official sources mainly The National Election Commission and the *Chronicle of the City of Poznań*

Of all voting terms, in Poznań the turnout in the 1994 local elections was the lowest, i.e. 30.13% (*cf.* Podemski 1994). This turnout is likely to be attributed to the disappointment (economic hardships) reflected in the low turnout in the parliamentary elections of 1993. Developments on the national political scene and the victory of post-communists probably also had their negative impact on the interest in local elections in Poznań which nevertheless were won by local Citizens' Committees (section 5.2).

The problem with analysing turnouts in local Council elections is that not much data has been published. It is available for 2002 and 2006. In 2002 the turnout in the elections to the Poznań City Council was 34.7%, i.e. 9.5% lower than the national average. However, this turnout was the third highest in the seven biggest cities (Warszawa 41.32%, Kraków 35.13%, Łódź 25.81%, Wrocław 32.95%, Gdańsk 34.64% and Szczecin 32.15%<sup>270</sup>). This

<sup>270</sup> The National Election Commission [*Państwowa Komisja Wyborcza*], 'Wybory do rad gmin 2002: wyniki głosowania i wyniki wyborów' [Elections to Councils of *Gminas* 2002. Results of voting and final results.], <http://wybory2002.pkw.gov.pl/grada/gw1/index.html>, accessed 21.01.2010.

points to the need to consider the size of an administrative unit to draw conclusions about local turnouts. In the next 2006 elections to the local Council in Poznań the turnout was 42.8%, i.e. it was only 3.11% lower than the national average (45.91%).

The important observation that Poznań is a big city, i.e. a very large *gmina*/powiat, has many consequences. As far as elections are concerned, in small *gminas* the participation in local elections tends to be higher than in large *gminas* (Zarycki 1999b). An explanation of this general trend is the electors' perceived effectiveness of local authorities (compare Cześnik 2007) which in Poznań, as in most large cities, tends to be questioned and was a strong issue in 2002 due to the changing law. Since in Poland electors' interest in local Council elections is 5% lower than in national parliamentary elections and turnouts in national presidential elections are higher than in national parliamentary elections, it is interesting to analyse the direct elections of the Mayor of Poznań.

Since 1990 Poznań has had only two Mayors, a fact which points to the stability of local government in Poznań. Between 1990-2001<sup>271</sup> Mayors were elected by and among City councillors. In 2002 Mayors were elected in direct elections for the first time. In the first round the average turnout in Poland was 44.24%. In the seven biggest cities turnouts were lower than the national average. In Poznań, it was 34.68%. Turnouts in other big cities in the first round were: Warszawa 41.34%, Kraków 35.14%<sup>272</sup>, Łódź 25.81%, Wrocław 32.95%, Gdańsk 34.64% and Szczecin 32.15%. The turnout in Poznań was the third highest. In Poznań there were 12 candidates. Five were considered serious. In the second round the turnouts were 35% on average in Poland and 23.9% in Poznań. Turnouts in other big cities in the second round were: Warszawa 34.29%, Łódź 24.77%, Wrocław 32.59%, Gdańsk 27.94% and Szczecin 31.81%. In Poznań it was the lowest. The two candidates who met in the second round in Poznań were Wojciech Szczęsny Kaczmarek (born in 1942) and Ryszard Grobelny (born in 1963). Both were previous Mayors of Poznań elected by the City Council: Kaczmarek from 1990-1998 and Grobelny, the incumbent Mayor, 1998-2002. In 2002 the residents chose between these two well known candidates, Kaczmarek and Grobelny who was 19 years younger. Grobelny – an independent candidate but supported by Civic Platform – won in the second round (37.92% of votes cast). Kaczmarek – also an independent candidate but without Civic Platform support –

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<sup>271</sup> That is prior to the 2002 Reform which introduced the direct elections of Mayors, see chapter 3, section 3.3.

<sup>272</sup> Only in Kraków the first round was conclusive.

lost (20.15%). The victory of the much younger Grobelny marked a generation change of which the emergence of Civic Platform<sup>273</sup> was another symptom. Grobelny invested in political marketing whereas the older candidate did not. Turnouts in both rounds may appear to have been surprisingly low, however both candidates stood for the same values and thus those who cast their votes manifested their preferences and not strong opinions.

In the elections for the Mayor of Poznań in 2006 the turnout in the first round was 39.56%, i.e. 5% higher than in 2002 (34.68%) and the result was inconclusive. The average turnout in Poland was 45.99%, i.e. 1.65% higher than in the 2002 first round. Turnouts in other big cities in the first round were: Warszawa 53%, Kraków 42.03%, Łódź 36.38%, Wrocław 40.04%, Gdańsk 44.40% and Szczecin 42.86%. The turnout in Poznań was again the third highest. In the first round there were 10 candidates<sup>274</sup>. In the second round there were two candidates Grobelny (independent) and Paśło-Wiśniewska (Civic Platform). Grobelny won 58.83% of votes and Paśło-Wiśniewska lost with 41.17% of votes cast. The turnout was lower (34.71% in Poznań and 39.69% in Poland) than in the first round. The candidate of Civic Platform lost to a much better known candidate. The knowness of Grobelny was probably the reason why he was re-elected as both he and Maria Paśło-Wiśniewska are liberals. Maria Paśło-Wiśniewska is a professor of economy and was a Poznań MP between 2005-2007. She was twice listed one of the 25 most influential women in Europe published by the *Wall Street Journal*. However she was never a councillor in Poznań. The local familiarity or knowness of Ryszard Grobelny seemed to be the main factor that influenced electors' decisions.

The second direct election of Grobelny was commented upon in very different ways. Knowledge of a candidate standing for the City Mayor appears to be more relevant to Poznań electors than their political affiliation. Groblewski, Director of PR and Public

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<sup>273</sup> In the 2007 parliamentary elections Civic Platform received around 53% of votes cast by the youngest electors (18-24 years of age). Information based on exit polls. \_\_\_\_ (2007) 'Dlaczego rocznik 83 woli Platformę?' [Why the 1983 generation prefers the Civic Platform?], *Portal Finansowy Money.pl*, 23. October, <http://news.money.pl/artykul/dlaczego;rocznik;83;woli;platforme,19,0,275219.html>, accessed 20.10.2008.

<sup>274</sup> Five of them were not members of any political party: Ryszard Grobelny (36.98% of votes in the first round), Katarzyna Kretkowska (4.52%), Wojciech J. Bogajewski (0.90%), Tadeusz J. Jarmołowicz-Chwiedorowicz (0.72%) and Władysław Reichelt (0.63% of votes). Ryszard Grobelny had already been the Mayor for the past two voting terms. Kretkowska and Jarmołowicz were former city councillors. At the same time all main parties present in the Parliament had their candidates in Poznań: Self-Defence (Andrzej K. Aumiller 1.01%), League of Polish Families (Piotr A. Kuź 0.41%), coalition of the Democratic Left Alliance, Social Democratic Party of Poland (SDPL), Democratic Party (PD) and the Labour Union-Left and Democrats (Andrzej I. Nowakowski 4.64%), Civic Platform (Maria Paśło-Wiśniewska 30.64%) and Law and Justice (Jacek Tomczak 19.55%). Tomczak was a City Councillor in the third voting term (1998-2002). Prior to the 2006 elections Nowakowski was Voivod of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship.

Opinion Office in the City Hall of Poznań commented on this situation and political parties' involvement in local elections as follows:

Surely local elections are to some extent votes cast on political parties but in Poznań it has been somewhat different. [...] Civic Platform won the last elections and has a majority in the City Council but its party candidate for the Mayor of Poznań lost. It had been believed that the nomination of Civic Platform would secure the victory of the party candidate. It turned out, however, that a party endorsement was not enough. [...] What surprised me was the difference in the votes cast for Mayor Grobelny and the other candidate in the second round. I thought the difference would be smaller whereas it was huge. This huge difference speaks best for the party endorsement not being decisive when it comes to who wins the elections. (Grobowski, City Hall, Director, PR and Public Opinion Office, Interview 2007)

However, Przybylska, a journalist from *Gazeta Wyborcza* Poznań Region supplement, drew attention to a telling discrepancy between Grobelny's victory and the lack of success of Grobelny's Election Committee in terms of its candidates for councillors:

The Election Committee of Ryszard Grobelny was an interesting phenomenon. Grobelny won the elections. Many thought that he had proved to be a good Mayor. But his Committee lost disastrously. It won only two mandates and they were won by Mayor Grobelny and his former Deputy-Mayor Kajzer. (Przybylska, Interview 2007)

In another part of the interview Grobowski, quoted above, emphasised the importance of the political affiliation of a candidate:

If Mayor Grobelny was the candidate of Civic Platform he would have won the first round getting 80% of the votes like Mayors of other cities. His situation, however, was difficult because he had no party shield [declared support]. (Grobowski, City Hall, Director, PR and Public Opinion Office, Interview 2007)

Civic Platform which emphasises the need for the further liberalisation of the economy and is against social privileges can count on Posnanians' support. But in local elections electors primarily vote for individuals:

In Poznań the name always counts. A person who is approved by citizens will always get a good result. (City Hall Official 3, Interview 2007)

Knowing the candidates in the context of elections may, however, not mean popularity. Sadowski, of the Barka<sup>275</sup> Foundation, describing the situation in Poznań said that the most common response of taxi-cab drivers asked for whom they would vote in the last elections was: "For this Grobelny. If not him, who can be better? He has already stolen enough. [...]"

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<sup>275</sup> For the information about the Barka Foundation see chapter 6, section 6.2.

What can he steal now?”. Sadowski added that some people were afraid to vote for a woman (i.e. for Paśło-Wiśniewska). Other comments offered by my interviewees about the re-election of Grobelny were more balanced. However, some interviewees agreed with Sadowski saying that people did not have a real choice and voted for ‘the lesser evil’ meaning that they voted for Grobelny because they did not see another promising or sound option e.g.:

The man they have chosen may not be ideal for the job and surely made some mistakes but he has proved that he respects democracy to an extent and is dedicated to economic progress. (Graczyk, Deputy Director, Cabinet of Poznań Powiat Staroste, Interview 2007)

Contrary to the quotes above by Sadowski and Graczyk, Groblewski emphasised the experience of Grobelny in running the city.

In all public debates Mayor Grobelny’s professionalism, his knowledge of issues troubling the citizens were undisputable. He gave competent answers to all questions asked, contrary to other candidates whose knowledge appeared to be shallow. (Groblewski, City Hall, Director, PR and Public Opinion Office, Interview 2007)

His opinion was confirmed with comments on their debates published on the on-line forum of *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poznań)<sup>276</sup>.

In Poland the turnout in local government elections has always been lower than in the preceding presidential or parliamentary elections. It may be that the energy of electors is consumed by national elections and the accompanying marketing of political parties at the national level. In Poznań where electors favour a liberal orientation, a mismatch between the political affiliation of the Prime Minister and that of the Chairperson of the City Council who is elected one year later, may be conducive to a lower turnout in local elections. It follows that the level of participation in any elections in Poznań has been strongly influenced by the developments on the national political scene, mainly in a negative way. This can be interpreted as the civil society of Poznań not wishing to endorse national developments of which they disapprove. Votes cast in the 2006 Poznań local elections demonstrate that when electors vote for councillors and MPs, they make a political choice. On the other hand, when they vote for the City Mayor, they vote for a

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<sup>276</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2006) ‘Zapis debaty Marii Paśło-Wiśniewskiej i Ryszarda Grobelnego w “Gazeta Café”’ [Notations of the debate session between Maria Paśło-Wiśniewska and Ryszard Grobelny in “Gazeta Café”], *Gazeta Wyborcza On-line, Poznań City Supplement*, 12 November, <http://poznan.gazeta.pl/poznan/1,36001,3734332.html>, accessed 21.01.2010.



known individual. Since the direct elections of Mayors have only been held twice, it can only be concluded that the interest in the elections increased in 2006. In Poznań and in Poland participation in the direct elections of Mayors has been at the same or lower level as participation in local Council elections. This may be due to a longer experience with the election of local Councils. The issue of political marketing may start to play a major role in future local elections.

### **5.3.3. Declared participation and the feeling of having a say**

It was observed (section 5.3.2) that in Poznań the turnout in the 2005 national elections was higher than the national average and in the 2006 elections to the local Council in Poznań it was lower than the national average but high amongst the biggest cities. In this part, based on questionnaires answered by residents of Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates, accountability is investigated further to gain more insight into attitudes towards participation in national parliamentary and presidential elections and elections to the local government and citizens' felt impact on public matters at national and local levels.

Participation in elections declared in 2007<sup>277</sup> by respondents from both Estates, who were eligible to vote<sup>278</sup> in the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections and the 2006 local government elections (of both Mayor and Council<sup>279</sup>) differs greatly. Participation declared by respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate was highest in the national presidential elections whereas respondents from Ławica Estate declared the highest participation in the national parliamentary elections. On average, the participation declared by residents from Ławica Estate was nearly 27% higher than participation declared by residents of Św. Łazarz Estate.

In Św. Łazarz Estate, 60.6% respondents declared they had participated in the presidential elections in 2005, 58.5% declared their participation in the 2005 parliamentary elections and 56.1% in local government elections in 2006. Differences in the declared participation are about 2%. The highest percentage of respondents declared participation in the presidential elections and the lowest percentage in the local government elections. Declared participation in the presidential elections matches the turnout in Poznań. Declared

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<sup>277</sup> My questionnaires were administered in 2007.

<sup>278</sup> Act on Electoral Law on Elections to the *Sejm* of the Republic of Poland and to the Senate of the Republic of Poland, dated 12 April 2001, Journal of Laws, 2001, No. 46, Item 499.

<sup>279</sup> Did you take part in last local government elections (election of the City Councillors or the City Mayor)?

participation in the parliamentary elections is nearly 9% higher than the turnout in Poznań. and 13.3% in the first round of local government elections.

In Ławica Estate 86.9% respondents declared their participation in the 2005 presidential elections, 88.3% in the 2005 parliamentary elections in 2005 and 82.0% in the 2006 local government elections. The declared participation is very high compared with the average turnout results in the city of Poznań and Poland.<sup>280</sup> Differences between declared participation and turnouts in Poznań are as follows: 34.38% in the case of presidential elections, 28.67% in parliamentary elections and 39.2% in the first round of local government elections.

Turnout in local elections tends to be higher in more affluent areas. Sociologist Podemski commented on the turnout in the 2006 elections in Poznań as follows:

Turnouts roughly corresponded to differences in spatial structure. In areas in which old tenement houses prevail, turnouts were much lower than the average. In areas dominated by single family houses, turnouts were above 60%. [...] In Poznań the difference between areas inhabited by the economically, socially, culturally and politically 'privileged' and the 'underprivileged' grows. This divide reflects differences in affluence, entrepreneurship and education levels. (Podemski 2006) [trans. OM]

In Poland declared participation in elections "is higher by about 15-20%" (Dzwończyk 2004:70). High declared participation can be due to respondents' feeling that it is expected of them to participate in elections. Since participation declared by respondents from Ławica Estate differs by more than 20% from the actual turnouts, to interpret this difference I focused on 3 variables which may have an influence on participation in elections, i.e. education level, family income, and age. These variables, according to Dzwończyk (2004), play an important role in decisions electors make about their participation in elections in Poland<sup>281</sup>.

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<sup>280</sup> In Ławica Estate the difference in the declared participation in national parliamentary and presidential elections is 1.4%. The declared participation in parliamentary elections is higher than in national presidential elections. The declared participation in local government elections is 4.9% lower than in presidential elections and 6.3 % lower than in parliamentary elections.

<sup>281</sup> "Research results demonstrate that the probability one will take part in elections increases with a higher education level, higher income and having an executive/managerial function. Age is the factor which significantly differentiates involvement in elections. In general the involvement is lowest in the youngest group eligible to vote." (Dzwończyk 2004:65) [trans. OM].

In my survey as many as 61.3% of my respondents in Ławica Estate had higher education, 35.5% secondary and only 3.2% of the respondents had vocational or lower level education completed. In Św. Łazarz Estate only 25% of respondents had higher education, 45.6% secondary education (comprehensive or technical) and 29.4% declared vocational and lower level of education completed. At the same time Ławica Estate residents are more affluent middle class residents whereas residents of Św. Łazarz Estate are mostly working class. This has been confirmed with the data on the declared range of family income (after tax; PLN/month) presented in Table 5.1. The percentage values for age categories declared by respondents are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.1 Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates: Range of family income (after tax; zł/month)

INCOME	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Less than 1000	14.7	1.6
1001 – 1500	8.8	9.7
1501 – 2000	8.8	4.8
2001 – 2500	17.6	3.2
2501 – 3000	7.4	1.6
3001 – 4000	8.8	4.8
4000 – 5000	4.4	11.3
More than 5001	1.5	30.6
Difficult to say; I do not know	27.9	32.3
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

Table 5.2 Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates: Age ranges

AGE	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
18-24	25.8	39.7
25-34	16.1	20.6
35-44	1.6	10.3
45-54	33.9	16.2
55 and more	22.6	13.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

Residents of Ławica Estate are both better educated and more affluent and their much higher declared participation in elections may be related to those two factors. To test the validity of this observation I formulated null hypotheses of independence of participation in elections and the education level (Table 5.3) as well as the age range (Table 5.4) of my

respondents<sup>282</sup>. (Alternative hypotheses would be that there is a relationship between turnout in elections and the level of education and turnout in elections and the age of respondents.) In fact, participation in the elections and educational levels in both Estates<sup>283</sup> are not significantly related (Table 5.3)<sup>284</sup>.

Table 5.3 The results of Pearson Chi-Square and associated significance levels for the level of education and participation in presidential/parliamentary/local government elections within Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates

	Św. Łazarz Estate		Ławica Estate	
	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Level of education * participation in presidential elections 2005	2.750	0.253	2.136	0.344
Level of education * participation in parliamentary elections 2005	3.944	0.139	3.319	0.190
Level of education * participation in local government elections 2006	3.939	0.140	2.629	0.269

Degree of freedom = 2

Alpha = 0.05

On the other hand the comparison of the results for the age range and participation in elections showed important differences (Table 5.4). In case of Ławica Estate the null hypothesis on elections was accepted, i.e. the results were not significant at the level of 5%. In case of Św. Łazarz Estate, however, the calculated significance levels of 0.001 (participation in presidential elections), 0.004 (parliamentary elections) and 0.000 (local government elections) for the Chi-square statistics suggest that the null hypotheses can be rejected, that in the Estate age is significantly related to participation. Using Cramer's V test (to measure the strength of the relationships between the variables), in each case this was indicated by a medium strength relationship.

<sup>282</sup> Detailed results with the crosstabulation Tables are presented in Appendix 2: Tables 1 to 12.

<sup>283</sup> Conducted at the significance level of alpha = 0.05 with the use of the Chi-square test of independence obtained results.

<sup>284</sup> They are not significant at the 5% level. The required value of 0.05 or less to provide an acceptable level of risk (5% risk of error, 95% non risk of error).

Table 5.4 The results of Pearson Chi-Square and associated significance levels for the age range and participation in presidential/parliamentary/local government elections within Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates

	Św. Łazarz Estate			Ławica Estate	
	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Cramer's V	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Age range* participation in presidential elections 2005	18.017	0.001	0.522	1.271	0.866
Age range * participation in parliamentary elections 2005	15.462	0.004	0.488	3.330	0.504
Age range * participation in local government elections 2006	21.450	0.000	0.570	8.519	0.074

Degree of freedom = 4

Alpha = 0.05

These results have not confirmed the validity of the factors identified by Dzwończyk except for age in the particular case of Św. Łazarz Estate. There declared participation of two age groups, the 18-24 and 45-54 year groups was markedly higher<sup>285</sup>. In the sample from Ławica Estate, participation declared by youngest respondents was not lower than that declared by other age groups. These results for Ławica Estate contradict Dzwończyk's (2004) claim that the youngest people eligible to cast votes tend to abstain from taking part in elections, a trend which because of its significance to democratic consolidation that needs further investigation. Changes may be recent and due to a new situation on the national political scene and growing GDP<sup>286</sup>. In the case of Św. Łazarz Estate, my results may indicate a major socio-economic change in progress.

<sup>285</sup> In the youngest group it was 42.5% in presidential elections, 42.1% in parliamentary elections and 45.9 % in local government elections. In the other group it was 27.5%, 28.9% and 29.7% respectively See Appendix 2: Tables 1 to 12.

<sup>286</sup> "[...] many stress that in new democracies, such as these of East-Central Europe (CEE), development of a participatory, engaged approach to politics among ordinary citizens is as important a goal as GDP growth or reform of bureaucracy, as without it democracy cannot consolidate." (Letki 2003:2).

According to Dzwonczyk (2004:69) the answers electors give to the question “Do elections ensure the option of a change?” influence turnout figures. I asked my questionnaire respondents: ‘Can citizens influence decisions affecting Poland?’. The question was answered positively (yes or probably) by 38.8% of respondents in Św. Łazarz Estate and by 30.8% of respondents in Ławica Estate<sup>287</sup>. The answers to the question ‘Can citizens influence decisions on city matters?’ were markedly different from the ones presented above: 57.35% of respondents in Św. Łazarz Estate and 62.9% in Ławica Estate gave a positive answer (yes or probably)<sup>288</sup>. This shows that local government in Poznań is closer to the residents of Poznań than national authorities. The above results correspond to the results from the Public Opinion Research Centre [CBOS] report from 2007<sup>289</sup> which reads:

It can be concluded that every 4th Pole that is 24% of Poles, feels that what is happening in Poland depends to some extent on the citizen. A much higher number - 42% of respondents, declare that they can influence local developments in their city or *gmina*. (CBOS report 2007) [trans. OM]

Analyses of a possible relationship between participation in national and local elections and the respondents’ feeling of having an influence on decisions taken at the national and city levels<sup>290</sup> follow (Table 5.5). In fact the experience at all types of election – parliamentary, presidential and local – and in both Estates does not bear out the relationship.

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<sup>287</sup> Negative answers (probably not or no) were chosen in Św. Łazarz Estate by 69.1% of the respondents and in Ławica Estate by 61.3% of respondents.

<sup>288</sup> Only 42.64% of respondents in Św. Łazarz Estate and 37.1% in Ławica Estate gave negative answers (probably not and no).

<sup>289</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (2007) ‘*Czy zwykły obywatel ma poczucie wpływu na sprawy publiczne?*’ [Does an ordinary citizen feel s/he can influence public affairs?] Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS), Warsaw, February, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2007/K\\_024\\_07.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2007/K_024_07.PDF), accessed 07.07.2010.

<sup>290</sup> Detailed results with the crosstabulation tables are presented in Appendix 2: Tables 13 to 18.

Table 5.5 The results of Pearson Chi-Square and associated significance levels for the feeling of having an influence on decisions at the national and city levels and participation in presidential/parliamentary/local government elections within Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates<sup>291</sup>

	Św. Łazarz Estate		Ławica Estate	
	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Participation in presidential elections 2005 * Can citizens influence decisions that affect Poland?	0.816	0.846	3.660	0.301
Participation parliamentary elections 2005* Can citizens influence decisions that affect Poland?	0.314	0.957	3.440	0.329
Participation local government elections 2006 * Can citizens influence decisions on the city matters?	2.372	0.499	2.170	0.538

Degree of freedom = 3

Alpha = 0.05

The null hypotheses of no relationship between the variables have been accepted as the variables<sup>292</sup> are not statistically associated in a significant manner. However, in Poznań turnouts grow and in Poland:

In last 15 years<sup>293</sup> the number of respondents who think that citizens have some influence on developments in the country has more than tripled whereas the number of those who think the same about local affairs has increased over 2.5 times. (CBOS report 2007<sup>294</sup>) [trans. OM].

According to the questionnaire survey respondents from the two Estates are more positive about the influence they have on local matters than on national matters.

<sup>291</sup> Eligible voters, i.e. respondents that were under 18 years of age at the time of the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections and the 2006 local government elections not included.

<sup>292</sup> I.e. participation in presidential and parliamentary elections in 2005 and respondents' feeling that they can influence decisions taken at the national level; and the participation in local government elections in 2006 and respondents' feeling that they can influence decisions taken at the city level.

<sup>293</sup> The first research by CBOS was carried out in 1992.

<sup>294</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2007) 'Czy zwykły obywatel ma poczucie wpływu na sprawy publiczne?' [Does an ordinary citizen feel s/he can influence public affairs?] (*ibid.*).

The final element of the analysis at this stage is to identify whether there is a possible relationship between the respondents' feeling of their having an influence on decisions at the national and city levels and their level of education and age<sup>295</sup>. Again, there would appear to be no apparent relationship in either Estate (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 The results of Pearson Chi-Square and associated significance levels for the respondents' feeling of having an influence on decisions taken at the national and city levels and the level of education and age of respondents in Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates

	Św. Łazarz Estate		Ławica Estate	
	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Age range changed * Can citizens influence decisions that affect Poland?	9.278	0.679	12.671	0.393
Age range changed * Can citizens influence decisions on the city matters? <sup>a</sup>	20.665	0.056	12.279	0.424
Level of education changed * Can citizens influence decisions that affect Poland?	4.032	0.672	7.021	0.319
Level of education changed * Can citizens influence decisions on the city matters? <sup>b</sup>	7.466	0.280	1.945	0.925

Degree of freedom = 6 <sup>a</sup>

Degree of freedom = 12 <sup>b</sup>

Alpha = 0.05

It can be speculated that a lower education level enhanced positive judgement of the respondents' influence on national and local affairs. Standing out from the results is the 0.056 value of the associated significance level for the feeling of having an influence on decisions at the city level and the age of my respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate. It is slightly above the alpha level and may be due to the age structure of my sample for this Estate<sup>296</sup> but again it may be a symptom of a major socio-economic change in progress. I assumed that an improving quality of life is likely to match the felt successful participation in public life, i.e. in having a say. This is discussed further in chapter 6.

<sup>295</sup> Detailed results with the crosstabulation tables are presented in Appendix 2: Tables 19 to 26.

<sup>296</sup> Most respondents in Św. Łazarz Estate were young, cf. chapter 4.



My analyses and observations made by sociologist Podemski (2006) suggest that: (1) the higher the education level (Ławica Estate), the higher is the participation in elections, (2) a lower education level enhances positive judgement of residents' (Św. Łazarz Estate) influence on national and local affairs but this judgement may be less realistic. The above points to the importance of education as the higher the education level, the higher is the probability that electors want to have a say about who represents them (participation in elections) and make informed choices (based on more realistic judgements).

#### 5.3.4. Estate Councils' elections: turnouts

In this section the focus is on turnouts in Estate Council elections which is very low if compared with other elections. First an explanation of the system of election of Estate Councils in Poznań is offered. My analysis of turnouts is based on data from the City Hall, interviews with mainly City officials and on my questionnaire data.

In Poznań, in addition to the local government elections, elections to Estate Councils i.e. accessory units, take place in March every 4<sup>th</sup> year after a given Estate Council was elected<sup>297</sup>. They have not been concurrent with local government elections. It needs to be stressed that the very date of elections to an Estate Council makes them less popular as an additional effort on the part of electors is required, not to mention electors' actual interest in local community affairs. The election procedure is defined for every Estate in its Election Statute<sup>298</sup>. If elections are not held due to an insufficient number of candidates, elections are organised again next March<sup>299</sup>. The Estate remains governed by the Board of the last Council. If the next elections are not held, the Estate is dissolved.

The picture of the turnout in Estate Council elections that emerges from detailed data obtained from the City Office is that elections to Estate Councils meet with little interest. Residents of Poznań participate most and more actively than residents of Poland at large in

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<sup>297</sup> This will change in 2011, see chapter 6, section 6.6.

<sup>298</sup> The Election Statute of an Estate is approved by the Council of the City of Poznań at the time the Council passes its Act on establishing a given Estate. The election is ordered by the Mayor of the City of Poznań. The organisation of the elections is in the hands of the Municipal Commission for Estate Elections. For the purpose of Estate Council elections, the Estate election commission and if needed election ward commissions are appointed.

<sup>299</sup> Poznań City Council's Act, approving the consolidated text of the Election Law to the Councils of Estates of the City of Poznań Councils and on its publication, dated 28 February 2006, No. LXXXVIII/997/IV/2006, *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Miasta Poznania* [Public Bulletin of the City of Poznań], [http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/uchwaly.html?co=print&uc\\_id\\_uchwaly=13671&p=](http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/uchwaly.html?co=print&uc_id_uchwaly=13671&p=), accessed 21.01.2010.

national elections. However, when it comes to the most local elections - that is Estate Council elections, residents' turnout is dramatically low. In the 1990s the average turnout in Estate elections in Poznań was between 9.35% (1997) and 22.9% (1995). Most elections were held in 2001 (in 28 Estates of the then total 65 Estates) and in 2005 (in 29 Estates out of 68 Estates). On average each year elections are held in 15 Poznań Estates. From the beginning of the year 2000 the average turnout was as follows: 7.05% in 2000, 11.14% in 2001, 12.77% in 2002, 13.48% in 2003, 8.3% in 2004, 9.98% in 2005<sup>300</sup> and 11.48% in 2006. Matczak (2006) reports that in Poznań turnouts in different Estates vary significantly: "the highest level reached was 46% and the lowest 2%." (Matczak 2006:150). In 2005 the lowest turnout was in Śródmieście Estate in the very centre of Poznań. It was 2.2%<sup>301</sup>. Śródmieście Estate is in the city centre and suffers from the shrinking city syndrome. There is little entrepreneurship and high unemployment. It is an area of old tenement houses (compare Podemski 2006 quoted above).

In three Estates the turnout does stand out for its relatively high levels. In Maltańskie Estate the average turnout since 1994 has been 43.75%, in Powstań Śląskich 39.47% (since 1996) and in Lotników Wielkopolskich Estate 46.05% with 49.5% being reached in 1999. Significantly all three estates have small populations (Maltańskie Estate has 721 residents, Powstań Śląskich Estate 553 and Lotników Wielkopolskich Estate has 680<sup>302</sup>) suggesting that in the smaller Estates the higher electoral turnouts<sup>303</sup> (Czeńnik 2007, Zarycki 1999b) imply a greater involvement of residents in local affairs (see also Matczak 2006 below).

Both Ławica and Św. Łazarz Estates were established in 1996 and elections to their Councils were held at the same time. The turnout in both Estates was highest in the first elections to their Councils. In Ławica Estate (population of 5,532) the turnout in 1997 was 26.2%, in 2001 it was 13.3%, 7% in 2005 and 7.5% in 2009, i.e. the turnout kept decreasing by almost 50% every time elections were held until the most recent elections. In comparison to average turnouts in Poznań elections to Estate Councils, the turnouts in Ławica Estate were close to average. The data (2007) from the questionnaires in both Estates confirmed the low interest in the Estates elections as only 19.1% of respondents

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<sup>300</sup> In 2005 some Estates did not hold elections because the number of candidates was too small, i.e. it did not meet the requirements set.

<sup>301</sup> —, *'Diagnoza: Sytuacja społeczno-gospodarcza Miasta Poznania'* [Diagnosis: socio-economic condition of the City of Poznań] (*op. cit.*).

<sup>302</sup> Data referring to the population in 2006.

<sup>303</sup> There are differences between the two estates, *cf.* chapter 4.

from Św. Łazarz Estate and 22.6% from Ławica Estate participated in the Estate Councils' elections<sup>304</sup>. In Św. Łazarz Estate, which is the biggest in terms of Estate population in Poznań (32,000 in 2007) the turnout in 1996 was 4.9%, in 2000 only 2.9%, in 2004 the turnout was 3.4% and 2.62% in 2008.

Turnouts in Św. Łazarz Estate have been markedly low (Antkowiak 1997) which can be attributed to its large size (population) as in Poznań the turnout is highest in smallest Estates. This is in accord with observations on higher turnouts in small *gminas* in general. This view is supported by the results of Matczak (2006:153) who did research on Poznań Estates and observed that “[p]articipation of inhabitants (measured by the election turnout) is significant only in the smaller units”<sup>305</sup>. Results pointing to the relevance of the size of the Estate are convincing. The size of an Estate has an impact on how strong a community its inhabitants create. However Matczak's opinion that “in terms of inhabitants' involvement in public life, the low electoral turnout supports the view of the disengagement of inhabitants” (Matczak 2006:151) may be questioned as residents' involvement in public life manifests itself in different ways (see chapter 6). Furthermore Pietrzyk-Reeves (2008:82) like McManus-Czubińska, Miller, Markowski and Wasilewski (2004, *cf.* chapter 3) argues that:

[...] low political participation [...] does not automatically suggest low civic engagement i.e. low membership of civil society associations, organizations and social networks of cooperation. (Pietrzyk-Reeves 2008:82)

Estate Councils' accountability and representativeness has become an issue. Low turnout worries Estate Councillors.

There are Estate Councils that enjoy high recognition and are effective. There are also Estate Councils that are hardly active and Estates in which it is difficult to elect a Council due to the low turnout in Estate Council elections. At present we [City Council] are considering changing the election system. Single-seat constituencies<sup>306</sup> may be more effective and contribute to strengthening bonds among the residents and the councillors they elect. (Grobowski, City Hall, Director, PR and Public Opinion Office)

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<sup>304</sup> 1.5% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate and 3.2% from Ławica Estate were under age at the time.

<sup>305</sup> There are only 9 Estates with populations under 1,000 in Poznań. The three Estates with high turnouts have been mentioned above and two others with populations under 1,000, namely Księża Ignacego Skorupki Estate and Morasko Estate with populations of 702 and 794 residents respectively have a higher turnout than the remaining Estates of Poznań.

<sup>306</sup> As yet, according to the provisions of the election law, designing single seat constituencies within 'accessory' units is a complicated task.

[...] Only after the elections, if residents do not like some local developments, voices are heard that the Estate Councillors do not represent the community as they have been elected by a few. But those who did not cast their votes also made an electoral decision to not participate in the elections. (Zagrocki, Ławica Estate Councillor, Interview 2007)

City Councillor Szczuciński estimated that only 15% to 20% of residents are really interested in the operations and projects of Poznań local government:

Election turnouts under 50% indicate that the majority of electors are not interested in what local authorities do. Their interest changes along with the changing relevance of local issues to residents. It can be claimed that people are active in situations where their private interests can be threatened. (City Councillor Szczuciński, Interview 2007)

To improve the very low turnout, Poznań City Councillors see a number of options which Kołodziejczak, Secretary of the City Council, summarised as follows:

One option is to hold elections to Estate Councils at the time of the elections of the City Council and Mayor. This would likely secure turnouts at around 40%. Turnouts that are high strongly legitimise elected authorities at any level. Another option are single-seat constituencies. [...] There is also a new project of casting votes electronically for which we have secured 8 million Euro in 2007-2013. (Kołodziejczak, Secretary, City Council, Interview 2007)

Residents can control authorities. One means of that control is exercised on the occasion of elections at which authorities' *accountability* is evaluated (*cf.* Soós 2001:202)<sup>307</sup>. Accountability usually refers to citizens' support for local authorities. In Estate Council elections the political affiliation of candidates does not seem to play any role (*cf.* chapter 6).

The Estate Council may not be perceived as an authority by members of the Estate community. The main reason is that Estate Councils do not provide major services. They try to meet some needs of the community but their budgets are small and the execution of Estate Councils' projects is in the hands of the City Hall officials. In this situation it is not surprising that turnouts in Estate Council elections is low. The issue whether low turnout in elections to councils of 'accessory' sub-local government units manifests the

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<sup>307</sup> Ballots are a powerful weapon. They are used to hold politicians accountable for the record of their political parties (*cf.* Janicka and Słomczyński 2004:421-2). In Poland in the absence of traditional political parties, turnouts hold politicians accountable in national elections. In local government elections in Poznań, i.e. in elections of the City Council, the political affiliation of candidates does play a role.

disengagement or lack of interest of community members in local affairs is investigated further in 5.4 below and in chapter 6.

#### **5.4. Responsiveness II and effectiveness of Poznań local government authorities: communication**

Local democracy is strengthened if residents are included in decision-making, i.e. they can voice their opinions and are listened to. My assumption is that the satisfaction of residents with the performance of their freely elected representatives will increase with more effective communication between local authorities and residents. In subsection 5.4.1 the analysis is performed in two steps. Firstly, the responsiveness and effectiveness of Poznań's local government authorities are reviewed from the point of view of the local authorities (interviews) themselves and verified by reference to my questionnaire analysis. Secondly, my questionnaire data is analysed to gain insight into the perceptions of the dialogue between authorities and residents by local residents (Ławica Estate and Św. Łazarz Estate) and how they evaluate the effectiveness of local authorities. In subsection 5.4.2 the focus is on the Estates and their residents.

##### **5.4.1. Local authorities**

Comprehensive and reciprocal communication should lead to stronger inclusion of residents in decision making processes and, consequently, to improvement of local democracy. An effective dialogue in a healthy local democracy entails connectedness of councillors with local residents. In what follows information passed and opinions shared by Councillors, the Mayor of Poznań, employees of the City Hall (Officials), MPs and journalists are presented and commented upon. I asked my interviewees about the channels being used by the local government and residents to communicate with one another. I was also interested to learn the interviewees' view of residents' involvement in the communication process and asked them about the extent to which their communication with residents has been reciprocal. The answers concentrated on three issues: different channels used by the City Hall, the flow of information and 'meetings' of Councillors with residents.

In cities and small *gminas* different patterns of communication are practiced. In smaller communities it is easier to reach people directly whereas in big cities the possibilities of using different mass media are wider. Dzikowski who was *wójt*, i.e. Mayor of a *gmina* neighbouring Poznań observed that:

In small *gminas*, new local newspapers, weeklies and so on are being published. They are published by local government but there are also private local newspapers published by a local opposition. In small *gminas* the local council organises meetings with local inhabitants and asks them to come. [...] In cities there are many options. There is regional and local television. There are newspapers that reach local residents. Surely there are less meetings<sup>308</sup>. Consequently, in cities the level of anonymity is higher. (Dzikowski MP, former Mayor (*Wójt*) of Tarnowo Podgórne Gmina, Interview 2007)

To reach as many residents as possible, the authorities of the City of Poznań use different channels: public media (newspapers, TV and radio channels), Internet and the City publications. A striking difference was observed in the opinions of the executive and legislative authorities. This is illustrated by quotations given and discussed below.

Mayor Grobelny (executive view) was critical about the way the communication works blaming the mass media for a lack of objective information. However Swianiewicz (2001b) warned that:

Most local politicians, when talking about how to better communicate with residents, concentrate on spreading information on local government's achievements and not on the ways councillors and officials can learn about residents' preferences. (Swianiewicz 2001b:65) [trans. OM]

This appears to be the case of Mayor Grobelny who negatively evaluated publications independent of the City Hall that are frequently critical.

The communication is relatively poor. We systematically carry out public opinion polls and trace opinions of the citizens and changes in their opinions and we really respect the feedback data we obtain. However on the whole the information flow does not work as it should because local residents rely primarily on information spread by electronic media, TV, dailies and to a lesser extent on radio broadcasts. My point is that those media do not spread objective information and the City authorities do not have their own information channels. (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007)

Clearly his opinion should be treated with caution as the City Hall has many means to inform citizens and uses them. In this context it was mentioned that the City Hall was planning to publish its own monthly in addition to its newsletters. The reason for this was again the questionable objectivity of the mass media. As one City Hall Official put it "We have the right to present our point of view." (Interview 2007). The same interviewee

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<sup>308</sup> It is impossible to say what Dzikowski MP meant. However, judging by his next sentence he thought about social cohesion.

commented upon a series of articles titled 'Przystanek Poznań'<sup>309</sup> published in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region Supplement.

[The articles] showed what is wrong in the city, that this or that has been neglected, but if one looks beyond particular cases, one has no problems seeing positive developments. [...] The aim of this series of articles was to embarrass the City authorities. It is not that residents who take part in consultations cannot come up with interesting and workable ideas. [...] <sup>310</sup> If they cannot come up with anything, who can? Is it the City Office? It is not its task. The task of the City Hall is to co-ordinate initiatives. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

In these opinions, the local authorities are presented as defenceless against critical judgements propagated by the media. My impression is that the City Hall really tries to reach local inhabitants using various channels. Firstly, there are special sections in Poznań dailies. In the *Głos Wielkopolski* [Voice of Wielkopolska daily] from time to time the City Bulletin section is included. Secondly, the Internet is used. Almost all information on the work of the local government is published there. The City very eagerly transmits various information to be used in various publications issued by Estate Councils. There is a problem with mutual trust as the heritage of the communist past seems to continue to influence the quality of contacts between the local authorities and citizens but this keeps changing. In the past the (executive) authorities had the ultimate power and did not accept criticism while since 1989 citizens' criticism of authorities has been openly voiced. The change of attitudes particularly applies to elected bodies of local government.

Members of the City Council (legislative view) recognised the fact that local authorities need to re-define themselves in the new realm. They must seek residents' approval for their operations and the issue of accountability to citizens is crucial. Alexandrowicz, Senator and former Councillor of the City of Poznań, expressed a negative opinion about the communication between the City Hall and local residents complaining that the authorities focus on informing rather than learning the opinions of the public (*cf.* Swianiewicz 2001b:65 quoted above). Alexandrowicz underlined that it is not easy to foster good communication patterns.

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<sup>309</sup> The title probably refers to *Northern Exposure*, an American TV comic drama series, and should be translated as 'Poznań Exposure'.

<sup>310</sup> "However, consultations and meetings are not always fruitful. At the meeting devoted to the project 'Poznań, European City of Culture' which I attended, there were artists but I have never seen more disorganised people. I did not understand what they were talking about and they did not understand each other. They did not come up with anything concrete." (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007).

It is the residents who must learn that they can put questions forward. They must also believe they can change something. (Alexandrowicz, MP and former Councillor, City of Poznań, Interview 2007)

City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki while referring to the process of publishing newsletters by Estate Councils pointed to the amount of work needed and the complexity of public procurement procedures. In City Councillor Mączkowski's opinion the city authorities do their best to inform the public about their activities. The mass media was viewed by Stuligrosz MP, former City Councillor, as a natural link between the community and local authorities. His argument was that the media widely inform and competently debate the work of the City Council and the City Hall.

Today, after 16 years of local self-governance, everybody has learned the lesson and that includes the mass media on which so much depends, that is the transmission of information and communication between local government and local citizens. In my opinion, the communication works quite well now. [...] There will probably always be journalists who are opinionated. While reading the press or listening to reporters one quickly learns who is for Mayor X and in every article written defends the mayor's interests and position. [...] However we increasingly observe that local dailies mainly *Głos Wielkopolski* and the Poznań Region Supplement to *Gazeta Wyborcza*, also local radio stations but more so Poznań TV programmes on Channel 3<sup>311</sup> are the main transmitters of information on current public affairs and are a natural link between the local government and local citizens. (Stuligrosz MP, Former Councillor, City of Poznań, Interview 2007)

In the process of communication between the local government and local residents, the use of the Internet was an issue. Interviewees valued this form of information dissemination and contacts with the residents except for Mayor Grobelny who regarded opinions published on the Internet to be of little value and judgmental. At the same time electronic services offered by the City Hall of Poznań are strongly dedicated to be informative and deliver new services to the residents. The collection of reciprocal information via the internet is at a trial stage in Poznań. The most detailed description of them was given by Wojciech Pelc, Head of Information Services Unit in the City Hall of Poznań (email dated 06.07.2007). His answer covered electronic services for the citizens including e-local government (*e-samorząd*), e-administration (*e-administracja*) and e-democracy. The three are platforms for the provision of public services online. From the technical point of view the authorities of Poznań do much to make the e-government initiatives meet the needs of the public. The design of territorial.gov.pl sites and the information they contain are, to a large extent, a result of self-governments' decisions and mirror the sensitivity of local

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<sup>311</sup> Public TV channel that focuses on news and has regional units.



governments to the needs of the public. In Poznań to assist the local citizens in accessing information:

In 1998 the City Hall introduced its MIM [*Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, Multimedia City Guide] service at <http://www.poznan.pl>. [...] In its early days the main functions of MIM were to provide information and to promote the city. But from the very beginning we tried to inform the citizens about the work and activities of the local government. We would write about current activities of the City Hall and the City Council long before the Act on Access to Public Information [dated 6 September 2001] was introduced. We would publish our citizen's guide to the local government. In 2003 we transformed our MIM into the required by law BIP [Public Information Bulletin, <http://bip.city.poznan.pl>]. [...] Despite the high imprecision of national regulations on BIP construction, we have paid great attention to building our local government information platform. The BIP of Poznań is considered to be the most comprehensive and largest in Poland. We were the first in Poland to have introduced online audio and video transmissions of all sittings of the Council already in 2005. [...] The BIP of Poznań keeps being continuously developed and the platform covers already 99% of the city organisational units. (Pelc, Head of Information Services Unit in the City Hall of Poznań, email 06.07.2007)

Local government in Poznań sees its role in facilitating residents' access to local administration and its e-administration platform is evolving. The implementation of any e-administration solution should be customer centric rather than organisation centric and should be transparent and remove dependence on specific individuals. The e-administration in Poznań can be accessed from <http://bip.city.poznan.pl> as this website contains 'do it via the internet' [online services] section. This section already contains the option of online booking the day and time with a relevant administrative unit and a number of forms that can be downloaded or submitted online

Local authorities, according to Dzikowski MP, have been opening up to the citizens who use the Internet to contact and control the authorities.

The website includes various polling options. The passing of opinions, evaluation of local authorities are also done via the Internet and thus the popularity of the BIP grows. The more contacts people have with the authorities, the better. And the Internet serves mass communication well. (Dzikowski, MP and Former Mayor (*Wójt*) of Tarnowo Podgórne Gmina, Interview 2007)

City Councillor Szczuciński in his answer pointed to the possible influence of the extensive introduction of Internet based services of local government on increasing the social exclusion of some groups of residents as not every citizen of Poznań has access to the Internet.

Poznań authorities have frequently received awards in all-Poland contests for their use of new technologies. Upon entering the official website of the City of Poznań one immediately sees how many things can be done via the Internet in Poznań. Poznań was the first in Poland to introduce registering business entities via the Internet and gradually the traditional administration is being replaced with e-administration. [...] Technology is used to reach the citizens: sittings of the City Council can be viewed online, all drafts of local Acts and spatial development plans are published on the Internet. Information about the councillors and how to contact them is also available on the Internet. What is a problem is the access to the Internet. Some projects aimed at making the access wider are in progress. In some libraries there are or will be computers available free of charge to the public that wishes to access public information. New hot-spots are being introduced. That project started in the Old Town and now tertiary education institutions, student housing facilities and locations where no companies provide access to the Internet are being equipped with hot-spots. [...] If we manage to provide access to the Internet to everybody interested, we can start thinking about introducing some of our new ideas of self-governance. The question is if and to what extent the introduction of new technologies will deepen social divides, social exclusion to be precise. (City Councillor Szczuciński, Interview 2007)

In Poznań the PIAP (Public Internet Access Point)<sup>312</sup> network is being developed and the ‘wireless Poznań’ project shall reduce the Internet divide. To make the Internet based services more widely available (e-inclusion) the local authorities of Poznań have also introduced online services for people with hearing and seeing difficulties.

To reduce the divide we have made sure that our online services are accessible to the blind who use screen-readers and in a month some of the website content will be available in the form of video clips with signed interpretation for the deaf. (Pelc, Head of Information Services Unit in the City Hall of Poznań, email 06.07.2007)

The potential ‘digital divide’ can be fought with legislation and technology. It should be added that:

Poznań is an example of best practice in that respect. However having implemented best solutions is one thing and another is the will to use them. (Councillor Nowakowski, Interview 2007)

City Councillor Mączkowski expressed the view that if residents feel they are not informed enough it is their own fault, as they have to be more open to new forms of media communication, the Internet in particular. They have to be pro-active to get the information they need. The role of the Internet in communicating with local authorities was summarized by Sadowski from Barka Foundation who said:

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<sup>312</sup> *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], ‘*Publiczny Punkt dostępu do Internetu*’ [Public Internet Access Point] <http://www.poznan.pl/piap>, accessed 05.04.2009.

Citizens access the information by themselves and do not have to go to a middle-man that is an official who could be an obstacle to the access. (Sadowski, Barka Foundation, Interview 2007)

Since the Poznań authorities invest much in improving information flow, I asked residents of Ławica and Św. Łazarz Estates about the sources of information on what is going on in the Estate or City used. Respondents were allowed to choose a maximum 5 out of 13 options (Table 5.7). Local press, information passed by people in the shops, on the street, by neighbours, and the Internet were commonly frequently chosen. In Ławica Estate respondents also chose flyers and folders sent by the Town Hall. In Św. Łazarz Estate respondents chose notices displayed on notice boards and added to the list of possible sources of information the WTK (local cable TV) which is not available in Ławica Estate.

Table 5.7 What sources of information about life in your estate or city do you use most often?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
Notices displayed in the Town Hall	1.7	25.8
Notices displayed on notice boards	23.7	42.2
Notices displayed in shops	35.6	32.8
Notices displayed at bus' stops and inside buses	18.6	37.5
Local press	57.6	46.9
Internet	42.4	50
Informed friends (e.g. Town Hall officials, councillors)	15.3	20.3
Information passed by people in the shops, on the street, by neighbours	52.5	43.8
Meeting organised by the Estate Council	6.8	7.8
Organised meetings with the President, Councillors, Officials	3.4	4.7
From family	35.6	32.8
Flyers, folders sent to you by the Town Hall	49.2	39.1
Other	-	4.7

Missing values were excluded. The percentages do not add up to 100% as the respondents could mark more than one answer.

Informative for the analysis are the results of the Chi-square test for independence between the two categorical variables (Table 5.8)<sup>313</sup>: the sense of ability to influence decisions of the city affairs and the sense of being informed (Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate Council?, for answers to this question only see Table 5.18).

<sup>313</sup> Detailed results with the crosstabulation tables are presented in Appendix 2: Tables 29 to 30.

Table 5.8 The results of Pearson Chi-Square and associated significance levels for the feeling of having an influence on decisions about the City affairs, the feeling of being informed about Estate (ergo City) matters and the age of respondents, and the effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań

	Św. Łazarz Estate			Ławica Estate	
	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Cramer's V	Pearson Chi-square Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council? * Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	17.976	0.035	0.297	8.190	0.515

Degree of freedom= 9

Alpha = 0.05

For Św. Łazarz Estate the relationships are statistically significant. Cramer's V (0.297) indicates that the relationship is weak however. For Ławica Estate, on the other hand, the null hypothesis was accepted. The difference can be attributed to various information channels being more effectively used by the City and Estate authorities in Św. Łazarz Estate.

Communication is an exchange of understanding and entails reciprocity. Effective and reciprocal communication has been judged to be essential. City Hall Official 3 reviewed communication between local authorities and residents emphasising that both have to learn to debate new initiatives and projects. Communication has to be reciprocal because authorities have to seek public approval to succeed and compromises need to be reached.

In my opinion now we can talk about 'bilateral' relations [between local government and residents]. They are not excellent. That is why there is the City Hall PR and Public Opinion Office. Its task is obvious and we are working on improving communication and the relations. The principle which politicians and councillors follow is that we should be looking for new ways of solving problems and new strategies. These may not be readily approved by the residents. To give a classic example [...] When the Eiffel Tower was being constructed in Paris, Parisians were outraged. They wanted to dismantle it. At first this project met with no approval whatsoever. It was a scandal. Every city, Poznań included, has an experience of introducing such pioneering projects. [...] It is the role of the leader – Mayor, and the City Council to design a strategy that will be really beneficial to the city and which will finally be approved by the society because an approval is needed. New ideas have to be strongly advocated to win social approval. This is a delicate matter which requires negotiation skills the mastery of which is crucial to local authorities being successful. (City Hall Official 3, Interview 2007)

The need for new patterns of communication has already been recognised by local authorities. According to journalist Przybylska, communication has improved. Problems surface in situations where officials have little contact with citizens and they have not mastered the skills of communication. In Przybylska's and Deputy Chairman of Board of Św. Łazarz Estate Council Pucher's views the communist understanding of authorities as *the power* has changed and now the City Hall has a different attitude towards citizens. Under communism officials did not bother with dissatisfied citizens believing that their workplaces were secure as the City Hall would not go "bankrupt" (Purcher, Interview 2007). The citizen was treated by the authorities as a burden. Now the City Hall is "a firm that cares about its clients" (Przybylska, Interview 2007) and its image. Referring to *citizens as customers or clients* is an example of a new but imperfect<sup>314</sup> language and an ongoing change in the relations between citizens and officials in the City Hall.

As far as the relations and information flow are concerned, a public institution office had long born bad associations. It was commonplace that an official looked down at a person who wanted anything from the office. The relation was that of a principal and an applicant. [...] That was the omnipresent pattern as long as the official did not experience the effects of strong social control. [...] This is truly essential that the criticism expressed by local residents is factual and they do not offend a person working for the City Hall. On the other hand, officials must also understand that when residents' are critical, they do not mob an official. (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of Board of Św. Łazarz Estate Council, Interview 2007)

[...] if a resident addresses an Official with an issue and the Official can claim that dealing with that particular issue is not within his or her competencies, the Official can hardly be made to deal with it. I am afraid that is the pattern in all public institutions. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

Surely there are some officials who do not pay attention to assuring quality communication. This is the case of some individuals and not of the local government. (City Councillor Kręglewski, Interview 2007)

Senator Alexandrowicz and Jankowiak, Member of the Board of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship, noticed that in the process of adjusting to the new realm the citizens are learning that they have the right to ask questions and express their concerns and opinions. So is there an emerging consensus that the city officials are effective at communicating with citizens and that the citizens have an awareness of how to communicate/contact the city officials when necessary.

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<sup>314</sup> Citizens should be treated with respect not only as customers or clients. In some situations they should be treated as contributors of new ideas, i.e. as partners.

It is a process. We have been observing how rapidly it advances. The emerging model is not perfect but [...] relations with local residents will always be dynamic and there will be a space for improvement. (Jankowiak, Member of the Board of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship, Interview 2007)

City Councillor Przybylak (Interview 2007) gave an example of an ecological activist who sued local authorities for blocking access to information on a landfill and won his case. The example shows that some citizens have already learned how to advocate effectively their opinions where local authorities disagree with the citizen.

According to City Hall Official 4, consultations on the Estate Statutes and elections to an Estate Council meet with little interest even if the relevant information is delivered to the doorstep of every household. However, if an issue that bothers local residents is at stake, residents' involvement is relatively high. City and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Woškowiak added that it is difficult to say whether the City Hall does enough to spread information because people respond actively only if the information is relevant to them directly. City Councillor Szczuciński shared this opinion. It is not that everybody and for various reasons is willing to directly participate in local democracy. Swianiewicz in 2001 observed that:

Regardless of the kind of incentive used to encourage direct participation, a large number of residents is interested only in receiving good quality services and not in coming to meeting with local authorities, filling out questionnaires or devoting their time to passing comments on local policies in any form. It is to be expected that those residents will not take active part in public consultations and consequently their preferences will not be recognised. (Swianiewicz 2001b:63) [trans. OM]

His observation was frequently mirrored in the responses of my interviewees in 2007. Posnansians are, in the opinion of the interviewees, active when an issue is relevant to them - their involvement is interest-based and issue-oriented (see chapter 6). As the City Hall is aware that its image depends on the quality of its operations, it has introduced its internal audit. The result is that "the [residents'] evaluation of the City Hall improves and the only complaint is not meeting the deadlines" (Grobowski, City Hall, Director, PR and Public Opinion Office, Interview 2007).

Communication of partnership quality would tend to follow the principle of reciprocity. Łybacka MP distinguished between unidirectional information transmission and reciprocal communication which is conducive to receiving feedback. She judged face-to-face

contacts to be most important<sup>315</sup>. A lack of partnership quality was an issue to various councillors.

There are mayors, councillors and they have their contact hours. The question to what extent people believe that them coming to a councillor will change anything. [...] I have been afraid that as a councillor I would have lots of issues to deal with and it is not so. [...] Surely there are situations where many people come to a Council meeting but they come for a particular reason that is relevant directly to them. (City Councillor Nowakowski, Interview 2007)

Councillors stressed that during their contact hours they deal mainly with the problems of individual residents.

Those who come are usually residents who have already exploited all procedures known to them. When they see that nothing can be done, they come to a councillor then to an MP in the hope that the elected representative can help them. Surely sometimes one can help but often nothing can be done. It is not like in the communist era when the local First Secretary of the Polish Workers Party could be addressed and would 'take care' of a problem to one's satisfaction. There are procedures. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

Local residents [...] come to councillors because they feel helpless while talking to City officials who not necessarily act as required. (City Councillor and former Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Dudziak, Interview 2007)

Councillors' evaluation of the quality of contacts varied. Some councillors complained that people do not come to them. According to Stuligrosz MP, councillors while communicating with residents should be able to identify problems and give a competent piece of advice.

[...] it is typical and observed by my colleagues till today. Has a person been a councillor for several terms, has he or she been perceived as competent, dedicated and wise, the more eagerly people come to talk to such an experienced councillor about their problems. And it is up to the councillor whether he or she decides to solve the problem. It depends on the councillor if he or she has the listening skills and the knowledge to identify to which unit in the city the problem should be addressed. All this helps a lot and is constructive to strengthening the authority of local self-government. (Stuligrosz MP, former Councillor, City of Poznań, Interview 2007)

However, the personalities of councillors do matter and some are more approachable than others. Councillors who are aware that citizens may not re-elect them if they are judged ineffective succeed in establishing contacts with local citizens.

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<sup>315</sup> She underlined that the use of the Internet is to assist communication and find information but it is not "to replace the real world" (Łybacka MP, Interview 2007).

If local residents were asked about the reciprocity and effectiveness of contacts with councillors, they would not necessarily share my opinion. But the number of people who get in touch with us keeps increasing. [...] The information about our contact hours is published on the Internet and spread by local media. And residents queue to talk to councillors. Some councillors are more popular than others but in my judgement in Poznań the contact between councillors and citizens is very good. (City Councillor and Sołacz Estate Councillor Nowowiejska, Interview 2007)

It should be noticed, however, that sometimes councillors have had unrealistic expectations. A recurrent assumption implicitly or explicitly indicated by a number of the interviewed councillors was that they would rather deal with issues other than those of concern to individual residents and with better grounded complaints. Some councillors explicitly referred to their meetings with residents during contact hours as consultations.

*Consultations* however mean primarily a legal form of exercising local democracy which is part of the decision-making process and obligatory while preparing local legal regulations or Acts.<sup>316</sup> From the legislative point of view, as Mikołajczak, Deputy Director of the Public Administration Department in the Ministry of Interior and Administration, said, consultations are both, a requirement and a key element in the decision-making processes. She remarked that nobody can claim they know everything and her perception of consultations as a way of learning from one another points to the advancement of the learning process in Poland at large. Consultations are mainly meetings at which issues are discussed or advice sought. They are held at all possible levels. At the lowest level it is local authorities that announce local consultations and ask residents what they think about a new project or a troublesome issue and its solutions debated by the City Council. Consultations may help to gain a popular approval for a proposed solution or a new investment project. Consultations (and some public opinion polls) carried out in Poznań by the City Hall PR and Public Opinion Office [*Biuro Kształtowania Relacji Społecznych*] between 2003 - 2008 referred to: primary and secondary education policies, revitalisation of some areas including a new use of the old tram depot and of now surplus railway land, both in the centre of the city, the location of a golf course, prices of tram and bus tickets, enlargement of paid parking area, and the future of Estate Councils. In Poznań (since November 2007) consultations are held prior to voting on every spatial development plan (email from Groblewski, City Hall, Director of PR and Public Opinion Office, dated 25.06.2008). Several plans become consulted upon every month. City Councillor

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<sup>316</sup> The issue of the legal statutes of consultations was brought up in chapter 3.



Mączkowski gave an example of successful consultations not with the public but with a group of professionals, which have been institutionalised in the form of a commission.

Poznań is the only city in Poland that has its waste management strategy<sup>317</sup>. In 2003-2004 we gathered 34 people who represented all kinds of entities involved in waste management. There were representatives of Estate Councils, associations of business entities and authorities of neighbouring *gminas*. There were also three City councillors. We did not need more councillors because we looked for external advice and opinions. There were also scientists from the three biggest Poznań HEIs: Adam Mickiewicz University, the Poznań University of Economics and the Poznań University of Technology. There were also representatives of self-governing professional associations. [...] Today Poznań is the only city that has a waste management strategy not for 4 or 8 years but for 28. This is the best example of our successful consultations. [...] Also at every sitting of the City Council's Spatial Planning Commission public consultations take place. I can not recall a sitting in the last 8 years that was attended only by its members. Various people come: representatives of associations of business entities, chambers of architects as well as representatives of NGOs and they all take the floor. Spatial planning policy generates changes in other domains and that is why the sittings of the Commission are popular with various entities. (City Councillor Mączkowski, Interview 2007)

When citizens participate in the decision making process on the initiative of local authorities, the process is easier and the effectiveness and accountability of local government increases.

Conflict does arise. It was in that context that Dzikowski MP mentioned the factor of emotions that frequently accompany local debates on new developments.

I say the more public consultations, the better is the decision taken and the lesser is the public's resistance and lack of approval. The more difficult and disputable is the decision to be taken, the more emotions accompany it. And God forbid moving ahead without public consultations. [...] Every action causes reaction. The action which was not consulted meets with instant resistance and it is very difficult to put an end to a negative response. Thus it is better to hold public consultations before a decision is taken and not to be afraid of consultations. It is better to say openly what the reason and purpose of the consultations are, why consultations are necessary and who needs them. (Dzikowski, MP and Former Mayor (*Wójt*) of Tarnowo Podgórne Gmina, Interview 2007)

It follows that experienced councillors are aware of the need for high quality communication and recognise the importance of informing the public about planned local developments at an early stage. Dzikowski pointed to the fact that when people know what is to happen, they tend to be more open to changes. City Councillor Przybylak gave a local

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<sup>317</sup> Officially approved in 2007.

example of a conflict situation in implementing changes in the local housing policy caused by the arrogance of a Deputy-Mayor of Poznań. The Deputy-Mayor wanted a company to manage all communal housing facilities. He was sure his new policy was good and he did not hold public consultations. As the public was not informed, they felt threatened. Eventually 3,000 people protested and the Deputy-Mayor needed the protection of city guards. The matter remains unsolved. Another negative example given by City Councillor Przybylak was a proposed rise of the cost of public transport tickets.

At first we were not able to explain to the residents why the rise has to be so high and how the public would benefit from paying more for the tickets. And there were no public consultations. This case speaks for the lack of tradition of holding public consultations. (City Councillor Przybylak, Interview 2007)

His comment on the lack of tradition refers to the process of enrooting good practice standards but also to the communist times. The old communist 'tradition' was implicitly referred to by Łybacka MP (member of the post-communist SLD) who brought up the issue of partnership.

If somebody asks me for an opinion, they respect me. They do not treat me as *patiens* in the decision making process but as *agens*<sup>318</sup> who has a say. Thus, for example, residents of street X should be asked the question: "do you agree to have the name of the street changed?". If they are not asked, the decision to change the name of the street is ideological<sup>319</sup>. The residents may want the change and they may not want it. It is not difficult to ask a question. [...] The example is trivial but it is important to the local residents that they changed the name of the street or that they did not agree to change the name and it was not changed. In both situations their role in the decision making process is that of agents. If, on the other hand, they get informed that the name of their street is to be changed on day X and they have to change their name cards, seals, etc., negative emotions surface if not anger. (Łybacka MP, Interview 2007)

Łybacka MP referred to the *przedmiot* (*patiens*) and the *podmiot* (*agens*) in politics. The distinction between people being treated as objects or as agents corresponds with the main difference between government and governance. Another apparently trivial example of changing street names was referred to by City and Dębiec Estate Councillor Nowicka. She gave an example of a situation in the Dębiec Estate area which was built up the 1970s. In the early 2000s the City Council decided, without consulting the local residents, to change street names there as many were named after communists. The local community consists to

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<sup>318</sup> Latin equivalents are used to avoid confusion. Łybacka used the word *przedmiot* (literally 'thing, object') translated as *patiens* and *podmiot* (literally 'subject') translated as *agens*, i.e. agent (or actor).

<sup>319</sup> Names of many objects have been changed since 1990 to eliminate references to the communist era.

an extent of the generation that grew up during the communist time and they felt excluded from decision-making. They filed the Council's decision with the court which ruled that consultations must take place.

There was much publicity and the consultations that were held were attended by many local residents. The turnout was high and the importance of consultations was demonstrated. In the end the names were changed because the majority of residents wanted them changed. The majority was not huge but it legitimised the changes. (City Councillor and Dębiec Estate Councillor Nowicka, Interview 2007)

The value of public consultations is that they make the authorities realise preferences and the real needs of residents. Groblewski, City Hall, Director PR and Public Opinion Office, gave an example of consultations on extending a bus line across Ławica Estate. Almost everybody was consulted because the matter addressed all members of the community. And a majority of residents did not want the extension. His other example was the renovation project of Półwiejska Street in Rybaki-Piaski Estate. In that case it was obvious that the people living there would suffer many inconveniences for several months. Thus a detailed schedule of the renovation was prepared and presented to local residents.

It helped. During the renovation works, there were no protests because the residents knew where, when and what inconveniences were to be expected. (Groblewski, City Hall, Director PR and Public Opinion Office, Interview 2007)

The very fact that the citizens are informed makes them a party included in a project debate.

Another form of consultations are questionnaires that are increasingly used by the City Hall. City Hall Official 1 drew attention to them and distinguished between *soft data*, i.e. what individuals say on a matter, and *hard data*, i.e. questionnaire statistics which is supposed to be more reliable. Statistical data is given more attention than soft data by councillors. The troublesome issue is the quality of statistical data.

If there is a scale, people tend to choose middle options. [...] Thus opinions given are not strong and, consequently, not precise. Then in the statistics the opinions of a minority of respondents are 'concealed'. As a result the hard data does not say all. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

Groblewski, City Hall, Director of PR and Public Opinion Office, gave an example of the relevance of opinion polls conducted by the City Hall that can give results very different than the 'soft' data meaning opinions of residents. On Gajowa Street in Jeżyce Estate a new development was planned. The case concerned a part of a small area of the old

zoological garden neighbouring an open air market. There was a project to build a modern shopping centre with some entertainment facilities there. Councillors worried about public approval for the project.

I remember that some Councillors spoke about 90% of local residents being against the proposed project. The public opinion poll demonstrated however that the local community would approve of the project provided that the old zoo would be transformed into a public park with some attractions. [...] Having witnessed the benefits of other new shopping centres, Posnanians are aware that a shopping centre can be beneficial for small local traders<sup>320</sup>. (Grobowski, City Hall, Director of PR and Public Opinion Office, Interview 2007)

This example shows that all forms of public consultations are valuable and that the City Hall supports the Council in the decision making process. Groblewski's comments about questionnaires are relevant as Poles tend to avoid disclosing their strong opinions on issues that are not of their immediate direct concern. In contrast to his questioning of soft data, the City authorities have invested in a discussion forum and chat room on their website and this, along with face-to-face consultations points to the attention given to opinions of the residents. Another topic he brought up, mentioned previously, is the unfriendly attitude of particular officials to residents. His comment is a case of negative peer evaluation which points to a growing awareness of the service quality issue.

The quantitative and qualitative aspects of consultations were elaborated further by City Hall Official 3 who reported on the City Hall's cooperation with the Department of Sociology of Adam Mickiewicz University. Since 2000 the Department monitors life quality indicators<sup>321</sup> within the city.

We [City authorities] are in touch with the citizens not only in cases of revitalisation or investment projects. [...] The City Hall has commissioned sociological research on the quality of life in Poznań. What is monitored includes safety issues, evaluation of the city administration's work, public transport, and other issues essential for our work. Research outcomes do influence decisions taken by the local government, particularly on city development strategies. [...] We have been paying much attention to direct public consultations and outcomes of the sociological surveys. We listen to what the residents say. (City Hall Official 3, Interview 2007)

By 'direct' public consultations City Hall Official 3 meant face-to-face consultations. Actually many Councillors were concerned with the quality of face-to-face consultations.

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<sup>320</sup> I.e. attract more customers to the aforementioned open market in particular.

<sup>321</sup> About this project see as well Cichocki 2005.

City Councillor Kręglewski highly valued questionnaires, i.e. 'hard' data. His point was that what one hears is not necessarily the opinion that prevails in the society.

I would opt for carefully prepared consultations held on the initiative of local authorities but I prefer competently designed and conducted opinion polls based on questionnaires. Results of such opinion polls objectively demonstrate the levels of support for a new project. In consultations initiated from the bottom that is by residents, only the dissatisfied voice their opinions. (City Councillor Kręglewski, Interview 2007)

Councillors may have a distorted picture as residents who support a project usually say nothing. The value of 'complete professionally designed and conducted surveys' was emphasised by Mayor Grobelny. The question remains, who tends to rely on the 'strong' data while arguing for or against a local law or new project. Is it the Council or the Mayor? The Mayor of Poznań and City Hall officials are involved in consultations but it is Councillors who take part in the meetings in person and are responsible for local policies.

The attitude of local authorities towards residents has changed profoundly since 1989 and the stress is being put on effective service delivery to the residents. The philosophy or attitude to public affairs that gives primacy to the interests of an individual was explained by journalist Bojarski who recalled that while writing his articles he frequently felt he needed to elaborate on what consultations actually are. He attributed the mismatched perception of consultations to the practices of the local authorities:

The authorities consult residents only occasionally when they have no other choice. [...] The truth is that they consult the residents when there are protests. This shows that the authorities are slow or that they cannot foresee the outcomes of their decisions or have problems making the public interested in being in touch with the authorities. [...] Frequently a councillor wants to meet with local residents to discuss something but few come. I would think it is not that the residents do not want to come, rather they do not have enough information. I am of the opinion that the basis of local democracy is communication. (Bojarski, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region supplement, Interview 2007)

Indeed, Bojarski's opinion on the role of communication in a democratic system sums up the issue of the importance of consultations.

A dialogue is essential as well as its style and language. The style may be dependant on the culture; however it is the changing language that testifies to authorities' already changed perception of residents, their requests and expectations. Even though none of my respondents talked about 'civil service', the authorities keep investing in improving the flow of information to communicate effectively and with due consideration of the public.

The local government in Poznań recognises its role in facilitating residents' access to local administration and its e-administration platform is the most advanced in Poland. To increase the quality and effectiveness of communication with residents, the local authorities of Poznań offer Internet-based consultation platforms which are to support traditional forms of public consultations.

Residents can use the Internet to share their opinions with the City Mayor and he reads their opinions. The question is to what degree their opinions are taken into consideration. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

At the time when I conducted interviews, the work on a new platform was in progress. Shortly after, the platform was ready.

As part of our e-Poznań we have delivered what we call the Social Communication Platform<sup>322</sup> which consists of a moderated discussion forum, a moderated chat-room and online webcasts of meetings with residents. (Pelc, Head of Information Services Unit in the City Hall of Poznań, email 06.07.2007)

In March 2009, the City Hall started to offer a new information service [*Biuro Informacji Teleinformatycznej*]. It is a call centre that functions as a Customer Care Centre. It employs 12 new officials (all are people with disabilities) who provide information on the operations of the City authorities including identification of the City Office Department responsible for handling the matter of concern to a resident. The call centre informs about procedures and documents needed to get a service requested and can book a meeting with a relevant official. If the matter is complicated, the call centre transfers the caller through to a City Office expert<sup>323</sup>.

The progress of learning processes based on the growing experience of local authorities manifests itself strongly in the changing communication patterns. As a result of the learning process, quality communication between local authorities and residents has become a priority for local authorities. City Councillor Ganowicz concluded:

The point is not to ask everybody for their opinion but to give everybody who wishes to share his or her opinion an opportunity to do so. (City Councillor Ganowicz, Interview 2007)

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<sup>322</sup> *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], 'Platforma Konsultacji Społecznych' [Social Communication Platform] <http://www.poznan.pl/forum>, accessed 28.03.2009.

<sup>323</sup> About call center in the City Hall of Poznań see: *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], 'Call center w Urzędzie Miasta Poznania' [Call centre in the City Hall of Poznań], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/wiadmag/news.html?co=print&id=30241&instance=1016&lang=pl&parent=0>, accessed 29.03.2009.

Residents have been given many options to voice their opinions on the policies of Poznań's local government and standards of their services. The voices of residents are increasingly collected, analysed and taken into consideration by local authorities. The evolution of a new communication style and language is an interesting phenomenon observable from the responses to the question about the *channels used by the local government and residents [of Poznań] to communicate with each other (information dissemination, contacts)*. The need for a new communication style and language, in addition to introducing new channels of communication, has been recognized by the Councillors and employees of the City Hall who offered numerous comments on the quality of communication while recognising their share in improving it. Another significant issue is the varied evaluation of councillors' face-to-face contacts with the residents. As in the case of officials, what needs to be learned are the procedures and a friendly approach to requests of the residents.

Quality communication has been strongly present in the responses of the interviewees. Interviewees who were or are Councillors and City Hall officials have had the experience of dealing directly with residents. They appeared to be aware of the social control local authorities can exercise. Poznań government is aware that residents are watching all its activities closely. Local authorities with some reservations accept criticism from journalists and dissatisfied residents. This criticism points to citizens' exercise of their controlling function. Even if residents are interested in participating in a decision-making process only if it concerns them directly, the improvement of the quality of local democracy takes place. Issues of concern to local communities or groups of citizens are being brought to the attention of councillors at meetings of the City or Estate Councils. The emerging patterns do not vary from those in mature democracies. At this point it can be concluded that the local government is pro-active and persistent in fostering democratic standards.

To evaluate the perceived responsiveness and effectiveness of Poznań local government authorities I asked residents of the two Estates two questions concerning the effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań (Table. 5.9) and the City Council (Table 5.10). The residents marked their answers on the scale 5-1, where 5 meant 'very well' and 1 meant 'very poorly'.

Table 5.9 How effectively do you think the Mayor of Poznań is doing his job overseeing the government of the city?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
Very poorly	3.3	10.4
Poorly	21.7	13.4
Neither poorly nor well	46.7	37.3
Well	23.3	26.9
Very well	5.0	11.9
Total	100.0	100.0

Missing values were excluded.

Table 5.10 How effectively do you think the City Council are doing their job overseeing the government of the city?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
Very poorly	3.3	11.9
Poorly	21.3	13.4
Neither poorly nor well	55.7	37.3
Well	18.0	23.9
Very well	1.6	13.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Missing values were excluded.

In the answers to both questions, respondents from both Estates gave similar answers in which a majority expressed a degree of ‘moderate contentment’ with the effectiveness of the Mayor and the City Council. Well known to Posnanians Mayor Grobelny was evaluated more highly than the much less known City Council. This is likely due to him being a high profile mayor. For Św. Łazarz Estate the mean value of the effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań is 3.16 and for the City Council it is 3.13 (standard deviation of 1.136 and 1.179 respectively). For Ławica Estate the mean values of the effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań and the City Council in was 3.05 and 2.93 respectively (standard deviation of 0.891 and 0.772 respectively). A Mann-Whitney U Test was employed to examine differences between the two independent groups on a continuous measure, that is the perceived effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań by respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate and Ławica Estate (Table 5.11). Later the same test was used to examine differences in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the City Council by residents of the two Estates (Table 5.12)<sup>324</sup>. In both cases the significance was accepted at the  $p \leq 0.05$  level that is, there was no statistically significant difference in the evaluation of the Mayor’s and Council’s effectiveness by the residents of both Estates.

<sup>324</sup> Detailed results are presented in Appendix 2: Tables 27 and 28.



Table 5.11 Mann-Whitney Test for differences between Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates: the effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań

	Effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań
Mann-Whitney U	1843.500
Z	-0.845
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.398

Alpha = 0.05

Table 5.12 Mann-Whitney Test for differences between Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates: the effectiveness of the Poznań City Council

	Effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań
Mann-Whitney U	1786.000
Z	-1.305
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.192

Alpha = 0.05

It should be noticed that over 20% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate chose to mark 'very poorly' or 'very well' while evaluating the Mayor and City Council (Tables 5.9 and 5.10). In the case of Ławica Estates only 8.3% respondents chose the extreme very poorly/very well answers while evaluating the effectiveness of Mayor and only 4.9% while evaluating the work of the City Council. On the other hand more residents of Ławica Estate chose the answer 'neither poorly nor well' (mayor's evaluation 46.7%, city council's evaluation 55.7%) than residents of Św. Łazarz Estate (37.3%). Much more moderate evaluations by residents of Ławica Estate are likely to be attributed to their higher level of education and holding more realistic opinions (more informed citizens). The fact that the same percentage of residents of Św. Łazarz Estate chose the answer 'neither poorly or well' while evaluating the performance of the Mayor and the City Council may be indicative of them being less informed – possibly not distinguishing between the executive and the legislative authorities, or answering the questionnaire mechanically, i.e. without due consideration.

Investigating the perception of the responsiveness of the City Council as the local legislative body further, I asked my respondents *in whose interest, generally speaking, they think, the City Councillors work* (Table 5.13).

Table 5.13 In whose interest, generally speaking, do you think the City Councillors work?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
Their own	8.1	13.2
Defined pressure groups	62.9	44.1
Those residents, who elected them	6.5	13.2
All Poznań residents and the whole city	22.6	29.4
Total	100.0	100.0

In both Estates most respondents chose the answer ‘defined pressure groups’ (Ławica 62.9%, Św. Łazarz 44.1%). In the questionnaire this answer was elaborated pointing to examples e.g. political parties and lobbying groups. Choosing ‘defined pressure groups’ may be indicative of the increasing role of political parties in local democracy in Poland which at the beginning of the 1990s in Poland was minimal but gradually has kept increasing (*cf.* Swianiewicz 2001a). The choice of ‘defined pressure groups’ may also indicate a reference to business entities and other pressure groups, NGOs included<sup>325</sup>. It is interesting that the second most popular choice among respondents in both Estates was ‘all Poznań residents and the whole city’ (29.4% in Św. Łazarz Estate and 22.6% in Ławica Estate). This choice can suggest that residents of the two Estates think that the wellbeing of the whole city is important for the Councillors in Poznań and that Councillors are representing all residents’ interests effectively. It also suggests that about one quarter of local residents trust local politicians and approve of local policies. As in 2006 the turnout in local elections was higher than 25% (close to 43%) and at least one quarter of councillors are re-elected, it appears that Posnanians are active electors.

Interestingly in the context of these results are the answers to the next question. The respondents were asked to evaluate on a scale from 5-1 (5 = ‘to large extent’ and 1 = ‘none’) to what extent the authorities of Poznań make decisions having in mind the expectations of the residents (Table 5.14). Three prompted answers referred to frequency, i.e. how often expectations of residents influence decisions taken by the authorities. The results for both Estates have been similar.

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<sup>325</sup> In 2001 Swianiewicz warned that: “The idea of direct inclusion of residents in decision-making processes is controversial. It may weaken mechanisms of representative democracy and it entails the threat that small but most active and best organised groups may exert an excessive impact on making a decision.” (Swianiewicz 2001b:63) [trans. OM].

The co-existence of NGOs with local government is discussed in chapter 6.

Table 5.14 To what extent do the authorities of Poznań (mayor and councillors) make their decisions having in mind the expectations of the residents?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
None	5.3	6.6
Occasionally	26.3	24.6
Sometimes	50.9	39.3
Often	15.8	27.9
To a large extent	1.8	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0

Missing values were excluded

Only 1.8% of residents of Ławica Estate and 1.6% in Św. Łazarz Estate believe that the local authorities of Poznań to a large extent make decisions having in the mind expectations of the residents. This is likely due to the high level of publicity on controversial huge investment projects which might be beneficial to the city but threaten the well-being of neighbourhoods. However only 5.3% and 6.6% of residents of the two Estates respectively think that none of the decisions are made with the expectations of the residents in mind. The residents of Św. Łazarz Estate were more positive in their evaluation (27.9% marked 4 'often' whereas in Ławica Estate 50.9% marked 3 'sometimes'). The mean value for Ławica Estate is 2.82 (standard deviation 0.826) and for Św. Łazarz Estate it is 2.93 (standard deviation 0.929).

Additionally, the respondents were asked *how often they go to the City Hall, seeking answers to matters of concern* (Table 5.15). Over 60% of respondents from both Estates declared they rarely if ever visit the City Hall.

Table 5.15 Visits to the City Hall seeking answers to matters of concern (or requesting services)

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
10 times a year or more	3.2	8.8
Several times a year	30.6	26.5
No more than once a year	25.8	14.7
Once every few years	29.0	32.4
Never	11.3	17.6
Total	100.0	100.0

The results for Ławica Estate and Św. Łazarz Estate differ. These differences are probably due to the different character of spatial functions prevailing in the two Estates which result in different matters that concern the residents (see section 6.5.1). 30.6% of respondents from Ławica Estate visit the City Hall several times a year whereas 32.4% of respondents

from Św. Łazarz Estate go to the City Hall once every few years<sup>326</sup>. Residents of Ławica Estate have a higher income and one of the reasons why they visit the City Hall may be their investment projects. Visits to the City Hall mean dealing with the City Hall officials, i.e. with its various Departments. The City Hall was not identified with the City Council.

Respondents were asked *if they know City Councillors*. If they did, they were asked to *give a name of the Councillors* they knew. The results show that in both estates residents (Ławica 66.1%, Św. Łazarz 77.9%) do not know who represents them in the City Council. Those results have been to an extent negatively verified when the residents gave names of Councillors they knew. A lack of name was treated as a 'No, I do not know any'. 29% of respondents from Ławica Estate and 16.2% of respondents from the Św. Łazarz Estate were able to identify one councillor. 4.8% in Ławica Estate and 5.9% in Św. Łazarz Estate identified more than one councillor. The most often named were City Councillors Maczkowski (independent) and Ganowicz and Rotnicka<sup>327</sup> (the last two in Ławica Estate, both from Civic Platform). Respondents often mistakenly put down names of MPs from Poznań (e.g. Krystyna Łybacka, Michał Tomczak), former Councillors (e.g. Senators Alexandrowicz and Libicki), people working for the wellbeing of those in need (e.g. Sadowski, NGO – Barka Foundation) or Mayor Grobelny and Deputy-Mayor Frankiewicz (known for being responsible for sports and thus the popular football teams). The lack of knowledge of the City Councillors can be due to residents of both Estates going to the City Hall with requests dealt by the City Hall employees (officials) rather than to meet Councillors. Swianiewicz in his publication *Życzliwa Obojętność* [Friendly Indifference] (2001b) wrote that according to his research (in which he compared the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Lithuania and occasionally also Slovakia):

Residents in the analysed countries differ in terms of the knowledge they have of local government. A good illustration of that is a comparison of the residents who declare that they know at least one Councillor. In Poland around 33% of residents of big cities and 76% of residents in the smallest rural *gminas* declare they know at least one Councillor. In the Czech Republic 80% to 89% residents know a Councillor and over 70% respondents declared that they know most of their Councillors. Undoubtedly the difference in responses given in those two countries is linked to the fact that Poland and the Czech Republic have their territories divided

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<sup>326</sup> Also there is a difference between living in a flat (Św. Łazarz Estate) and in a single-family house (Ławica Estate) as flat tenants address landlords with requests and landlords are responsible for handling them whereas owners of the houses have to take care of their problems themselves.

<sup>327</sup> Councillor Ganowicz is Chairperson of the City Council since 2005. Rotnicka chaired the City Council in 1990-1998 and since 2007 is Senator in the Polish parliament.

administratively in very different ways. Over 6,000 Czech 1<sup>st</sup> tier units are among the smallest in Europe whereas the Polish ones are 10 times bigger on average. The size of the basic administrative unit is among the most important factors that explain differences in the perception of local governments by local residents and frequently it helps to understand not only differences within a country but also among different countries. (Swianiewicz 2001b:57) [trans. OM]

Compared with the communist period, relations between the City authorities and citizens changed noticeably. Though the heritage continues to linger and thus there is the issue of mutual trust, local authorities have been opening up to the citizens. Elected authorities do have problems with strong criticism but they are aware they must be accountable to the community. City Hall officials have been learning new communication standards. The citizen is no longer treated as a burden by local government executive bodies. The trend is a positive sign for local democracy because comprehensive and reciprocal communication leads to the wider participation of residents in decision making processes. Local authorities clearly make an effort to learn the needs of residents. The question is whether local authorities elected by local residents to take care of their needs can question residents' involvement in local affairs. For further discussion see chapter 6, section 6.4). The point is that not everything that the local government of a big municipality does is highly relevant to all its residents. Quality communication improves the effectiveness of local government. In Poznań as my analyses demonstrated, the policy of local government has been on the whole approved by local residents.

#### **5.4.2. Estates**

Responsiveness and effectiveness of Estates can be questioned on the grounds of low turnouts in elections of Estate Councils which are a concern of Estate Councillors and trouble City authorities. If Estate Councils are not effective, they are not responsive, i.e. they do not meet the needs of their communities. However, most needs are to be met by the City Hall which is responsible for providing services to residents of Poznań. In this part the competencies of Estates are discussed as well as the issues of Estates' small budgets and their dependence on the City Hall (administration) in the context of the effectiveness (visibility) of Estates. Responsiveness and effectiveness of Estates are analysed further by examining trust in Councillors and patterns of residents' communication with Estates and by extension with the City Council (analysis based on questionnaires).

It is the City Council that decides which of its competencies to pass to an Estate Council and the competencies of Estate Councils are always limited. Basic competencies are

defined in the Poznań City Charter Art. 42 and primarily include: writing postulates and presenting local residents' expectations (needs, aspirations and opinions) to the City Council and Mayor; expressing opinions on the City authorities' plans directly relevant to the area and residents of an Estate; co-organising and supporting local residents' initiatives aimed at improving living conditions in the Estate; presenting opinions on the management of investments and other undertakings carried out by the City administration units in the area of a given Estate; managing the financial means singled out in the City budget for the purpose of a given Estate; co-participating in designing the City budget in sections that refer to a given Estate; presenting opinions on spatial development plans in a given Estate area. Matczak (2006:148) observes that there "is no special area of competence set in legislation" for 'accessory' units of sub-local government. In short:

The law leaves space for local initiatives, within the scope of the competence of local governments. (Matczak 2006:148)

Mayor Grobelny, who holds a highly critical opinion about the effectiveness of Estates (see also chapter 6, section 6.6), said that:

Estate self-governments do not have any competencies except for organising festivals and sport events and acting as consultants. (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007)

This view is contested and will be discussed below. The competencies of Poznań Estates described above make them advisory bodies to local government. Estates are self-governing. However, Estate Councils are not juristic persons and thus they can act only within the frames of the *gmina*/municipal poviat that is a juristic person. The Act on Public Procurement (29 January 2004) excludes public entities which are not juristic persons from taking direct part in public procurement procedures. In the light of the above, it needs to be investigated to what extent Estates are self-governing.

Estates have tasks and budgets. Tasks of Estate governing bodies emphasised in the City Charter (Art. 41) are aimed at satisfying the needs of the Estate community, in particular taking care of the spatial order, safety, the condition of local roads, pavements and car parking lots, local technical infrastructure, natural environment, management of some City properties and improvement of services available within the area of a given Estate. The budgets of Estate Councils are part of the City budget (City Charter Art. 44) and are but a fraction of it e.g. 0.23% in 2003. The investment budget of the Estate depends on the population of the Estate and is calculated in the poll tax mode. Resolutions of an Estate

Council (or in the smallest Estates their General Assemblies) are taken in response to the needs of the Estate community and with due consideration of the Estate budget limitations. Expenditure must be consulted with the City Hall and execution of most resolutions is in the hands of the City Hall, i.e. the executive authority of the City of Poznań. In this situation the executive power of Estate authorities is very little and only those projects of Estates that do not need financial investment can be fully executed by Estate authorities.

In the end there is much disproportion in terms of what the City Hall and Estate Councils can actually do. (City Councillor and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007)

The system of Estates is being reviewed and the low turnout in the Estate Council elections is one of the reasons of a possible revision of the Estate formula (see chapter 6, section 6.6).

We are considering various solutions but the essential thing is to increase the competencies of very local self-governments. It is the residents who have to see that they have an actual impact. (Kołodziejczak, Secretary, City Council, Interview 2007)

According to Zagrocki, Ławica Estate Councillor, the very small budgets of Estates negatively influences the residents' interest in their local community affairs.

In Estates like ours, people live in a hurry and have little time for public affairs. I think they would be more interested in local affairs if we could prepare more spectacular events than meetings at which executive summaries are presented. However we cannot do much as the Estate budget is small. (Zagrocki, Ławica Estate Councillor, Interview 2007)

Competencies, small budgets and the dependence on the City Hall as the executive authority negatively influence the visibility of Estate Councils. The Estates, born out of civic initiatives, have also encountered difficulties the source of which is in the Estate Councillors' lack of experience in administrative procedures.

At the time when the first Estates were established maybe there was too much civic ideology but it worked. Problems surfaced later when Estate Councils had to learn procedures. Their competencies have been enlarged and Councils could be given money from the City budget. Once that happened the Estate Councils had to learn how to function within local administration, understand public procurement procedures, the City Statutes and the like. And suddenly everything became too complicated for the Estates. Estate Councils wanted the money for their communities but did not want procedures. They would prefer the City Hall administration to take care of formal matters. (City Councillor and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007)

Public money is under public scrutiny and Estate Councillors have to be competent in financial issues. Estate authorities want better cooperation with the City Hall. They want to be able to take care of the needs of their communities more efficiently but they do not wish to become part of the City executive authority supervised by Mayor. The debate on a possible redesign of the system of Estates is reported in chapter 6 devoted to civil society manifestations in Poznań.

Estate authorities as advisory bodies to the City Council and as leaders of community-based Estates are in touch with local residents. For them quality communication is essential as they are a channel through which information can be passed to the City authorities and they have to take informed decisions about priority needs of their communities. My interviewees, who were Estate Councillors, questioned the quality of face-to-face consultations on various grounds. Their main concern was the residents' disinterest in coming to meetings. City and Warszawskie Estate Councillor Grześ and City and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski gave examples of an Estate Council meeting devoted to the Estate Councils' Statutes that were hardly of any interest to local communities. City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki commented on the low attendance as follows:

Local residents come to me and say that meetings are important. We keep organising them and invite guest panellists. The worst situation is when at a meeting the number of guest panellists is higher than the number of members of the local community. [...] The question is how to make local residents active, to make them feel responsible for everything in their area and aware that their area is their environment and that they can have a say on its condition. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

Skrzypczak, Ławica Estate Councillor, gave an example of the futility of the meetings due not only to the little attendance but also 'the meeting' being a very limited forum at which polar opinions are expressed and hardly any consensus can be reached.

Thus we are hesitant about organising large meetings. Experience has taught us that every second attendee is of a different opinion. (Ławica Estate Councillor Skrzypczak, Interview 2007)

Residents' involvement in local affairs worried Estate Councillors. Not only is it low but also residents' individual interests frequently prevail over community interests. This is a major obstruction as voices of individuals advocating their interests in the absence of other community members block some projects. City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki gave an example of a futile dispute on the location of a bus stop which



sabotaged ‘consultations’ as most participants stuck to a ‘not in my backyard’ philosophy. On this egoistic approach to policy making he commented as follows:

Unfortunately, I have to keep repeating that if one lives in a big city, one has to bear the consequences of living there. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

Characteristically face-to-face consultations tended to be referred to as meetings by all my interviewees. This subtle difference speaks for the still instable perception of the function of public consultations.

The engagement of the Estate Board is high and the workload is big as the Estate Board is the ‘executive’ authority of the Estate. Ławica Estate Councillor Skrzypczak spoke about the little involvement of local communities and contrasted it with the huge involvement of Estate Councillors.

We ask local residents to come to the sitting of the Estate Council to share their problems with us but we do not have much power nor means to keep inviting individual residents to every single sitting or event. How much time can one devote to knocking at doors, the response being so little? (Skrzypczak, Ławica Estate Councillor, Interview 2007)

In this context City and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski drew attention to the fact that:

Estate Councillors are altruists [*społecznik*] and cannot be forced to do some things for there are no tools to make them react to everything. (Actually almost every day they should come to the City Office to collect some papers.) They are people who have their jobs and in addition deal with many matters as councillors. (City Councillor and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski, Interview 2007)

Current connotations of the word *społecznik* are interesting. *Spółecznik* is a community-oriented activist who risks being perceived as weird since he or she struggles primarily with an administrative system for no personal benefit. This effort is considered to be huge if not ‘suicidal’. At this point it should be emphasised again that the expression *civil service* was hardly used by my interviewees in reference to the executive authority of the City of Poznań.

An evaluation of the responsiveness and effectiveness of authorities of community-based Estates encounters a major difficulty due to their status. Residents of Ławica and Św. Łazarz Estates were asked if they knew their Estate Councillors. Matczak (2006:148) writes that majority of Poznań’s residents “have little awareness” of Estate Councils.

Responses to the question ‘Do you know who is a member of your Estate Council?’ differed interestingly from answers given to the questions about the City Councillors. Only 1.5% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate were able to name an Estate Councillor. This percentage is strikingly low especially as one of the Św. Łazarz Estate Councillors (Woškowiak) was at the time of my research both a City and Estate Councillor. In Ławica Estate the percentage of respondents who were able to name at least one Estate Councillor (and none of them is a City councillor) was 27.4%, i.e. more than every fourth respondent knew an Estate Councillor. What is more, they knew Estate Councillors personally<sup>328</sup>. The difference is likely due to different sizes of the two Estates. Św. Łazarz Estate is the biggest in Poznań in terms of its population (31,496 in 2006) whereas Ławica Estate population is much smaller (5,532)<sup>329</sup>. In the context of the above discussed difference between the two Estates, answers to my other questions gain a different perspective.

Respondents in the two Estates were asked if they would tell City Councillors (Table 5.16) and their Estate Councillors (Table 5.17) about their individual problems (e.g. difficulties paying rent or troubling noise) that could be solved by the City Councils. The answers to the first question (Table 5.16) show that in both Estates positive answers (‘yes, definitely’ and ‘probably’) are at about the same level: 43.5% for Ławica Estate and 42.6% for Św. Łazarz. Respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate hold slightly stronger opinions (4.7% more of respondents from Św. Łazarz said ‘yes, definitely’). The percentages of positive answers for both Estates are close to the turnout in the last elections to the City Council which was 42.8%.

Table 5.16 Would you tell a City Councillor about your individual problem that can be solved by the city Council?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
yes, definitely	12.9	17.6
Probably	30.6	25.0
probably not	35.5	36.8
no, definitely	21.0	20.6
Total	100.0	100.0

When asked about sharing problems with Estate Councillors the respondents from Ławica Estate showed more trust or rather connectedness with the Estate Councillors. In Ławica

<sup>328</sup> In most cases respondents from Ławica Estate gave the names of Estate Councillors Skrzypczak and Sobczak. Sobczak is also Chairman of *Stowarzyszenie Przyjaciół Osiedla Ławica* [Association of Ławica Estate Friends], <http://www.lawica.poznan.pl/>, accessed 30.05.2009.

<sup>329</sup> The average *gmina* population in Poland is 15.5 thousand. The smallest Polish *gmina* has population of 1.4 thousand.

Estate 22.6% answered ‘yes, definitely,’ whereas in Św. Łazarz Estate only 11.8% gave this answer. Strikingly 22.6% of Ławica Estate respondents also declared they participated in the last elections to their Estate Council. Quantitative data on attitudes, i.e. *would you* questions in questionnaires does not give a complete picture for many reasons; one of them being that a minority of the ones asked to complete a questionnaire are willing to do so. However, my data from Ławica Estate is cohesive and as such points to its reliability. Generally positive answers (‘yes, definitely’ and ‘probably’) were given by 64.5% of respondents from Ławica Estate and by 44.2% of respondents in Św. Łazarz Estate. ‘No, definitely’ was chosen by only 8.1% of respondents from Ławica Estate and 17.6% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate. The much higher percentage of negative answers given by respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate is likely to be linked to the respondents not knowing their Estate Councillors.

Table 5.17 Would you tell your Estate Councillor about your individual problem that can be solved in the city?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
yes, definitely	22.6	11.8
probably	41.9	32.4
probably not	27.4	38.2
no, definitely	8.1	17.6
Total	100.0	100.0

The above results prove to be correct in the context of the results from the report “Trust in private and public sphere and civil society” [*Zaufanie w sferze prywatnej i publicznej a społeczeństwo obywatelskie*] of the Public Opinion Research Centre published in February 2006<sup>330</sup>. The data presented in the report shows that in Poland in 2006, 56% of the respondents (53% in 2004 and 43% in 2002) trusted local authorities. For the sake of comparison, in 2006 trust in the Parliament was declared by only 24% respondents (24% in 2005 and 13% in 2002). Growing trust can be treated as an indicator of democracy enrooting. In Poland trust is strongest in local people.

As it has been assumed that the residents’ satisfaction with the activities of local authorities can be increased with improvement of communication between local residents and authorities, my questionnaire included a question on the relevance of communication channels used. I asked residents of the two Estates if they usually receive announcements

<sup>330</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2006) ‘*Zaufanie w sferze prywatnej i publicznej a społeczeństwo obywatelskie*’ [Trust in private and public sphere and civil society], *Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS)*, Warsaw, February.

and information from the Estate Council and, by extension, also from the City Council (Table 5.18).

Table 5.18 Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate Council?

	Ławica Estate (%)	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)
Yes, to a large extent	11.3	16.2
Rather yes	35.5	47.1
Rather not	32.3	14.7
No, I am not receiving them at all	21.0	22.1
Total	100.0	100.0

In both Estates the number of those do not receive information at all was around 21%. The ‘rather yes’ answer was chosen by 47.1% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate and 35.5% of respondents from Ławica Estate. The crucial differences between the answers from the two Estates is in percentages of those who gave the answer ‘rather not’ as in Ławica Estate 32.3% of respondents marked this answer and in Św. Łazarz Estate only 14.7% of respondents. This difference can be due to the fact that Św. Łazarz Estate having a larger population has a bigger budget and can afford a newsletter in the form of a nicely published magazine. In Ławica Estate, on the other hand, the budget is small and information is disseminated in the form of photocopied flyers and notices pinned to notice boards next to the local church and the seat of the Estate Council. Those who do not receive announcements and information from the Estate Council were asked to point to possible reasons. Respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate answered: ‘I am not interested’ (20%), ‘Difficult to say’ (36%) and ‘They are disseminated in a wrong way’ (44%). In Ławica Estate over 63% of respondents pointed to problems with the dissemination of information from the Estate Councils and only 9.1% of respondents were not interested in receiving the information.

## 5.5. Conclusions

This evaluation of the performance of local democracy has been based on the analysis of representative democracy and citizens’ inclusion by local government in decision making. The effectiveness of Poznań’s local government authorities was evaluated by the residents of both case study Estates as moderate. Residents of Ławica Estate, who were more consistent in their questionnaire answers, were less positive in their evaluation of the effectiveness of the Mayor and the City Council. On the whole well known to Posnanians Mayor Grobelny was evaluated slightly better than the much less known City Council. The results also indicate that about 25% of local residents trust local politicians and approve of

local policies and that Councillors of Poznań are perceived as caring for the wellbeing of the whole city and being effective representatives. Responsiveness is difficult to measure. It was assumed that the residents' satisfaction with the actions undertaken by local authorities can be increased with improvement of communication between the residents and authorities. The term 'friendly indifference' used by Swianiewicz (2001a), proved to be relevant in context of the over-all evaluation of local government authorities of Poznań by the residents of Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates. The importance of the size of the sub-city levels was confirmed as residents of smaller Estates tend to trust more or rather feel higher connectedness with local authorities. As the Estate population number conditions the Estate's basic budget, both need to be considered carefully in further analyses of the Poznań system of Estates (see chapter 6).

My analyses of the residents' responses to questions on the condition of Polish democracy and local democracy in Poznań were frequently inconclusive, however the results cannot be interpreted as undermining of Poznań's local democracy. They have interesting implications like the relevance of the size of an administrative unit to the interpretation of data obtained from small and large population units e.g. the connectedness of authorities and citizens. Another interesting implication, to mention but one more, is the factor of the education level of an individual and its relevance to opinions held and decisions taken. Differences in the affluence of residents also matter. Finally the different character of spatial functions prevailing in the sub-city units may have an effect on the ways of communication between the residents of those units and city authorities.

The activities of the local government of Poznań are symptomatic of the authorities' recognition of the need to be responsive, effective and accountable. Much effort has been put into upgrading the quality and intensity of the authorities' communication with local residents. The learning process has reached the stage at which the democratic institutions seek to improve themselves, as the current debate on the status and efficiency of accessory units demonstrates. As such this is a strong indicator of a maturing democracy.

## 6. Civil society at work

Chapter 5 explored key aspects of local democracy in Poznań, elections and voting turnout as underpinning representative democracy and how citizens become included in governmental processes, related more to participatory democracy. This chapter focuses on the role of civil society in Poznań and in its Estates, based on the widely accepted premise that a vibrant civil society is essential to the democratic polity.

The vibrancy of civil society is first explored through its effectiveness, the extent to which city government in Poznań is in working partnerships with it, what activities it embraces and who becomes involved in local affairs. Section 6.1 presents the attitudes of the interviewees towards civil society in the context of local democracy. Community, neighbourhood and *ad hoc* groups of residents are identified as organisations representative of civil society. However, many such organisations are relatively informal – lacking a constitution, for example – and if they are registered it is usually at the poviast level only. A low level of formality places extra importance on the environment in which they operate, that is on the laws and regulations (procedures) and attitudes of the authorities, that can encourage or constrain the activities of civil society. The quality of policy dialogue between local authorities and civil society is relevant to the evaluation of local government's accountability and effectiveness and is examined in subsection 6.1.1. These issues are investigated further by looking at the partnerships between Poznań authorities and major civil society organisations (NGOs) (section 6.2). Many of these organisations which local authorities treat as partners are those that apply for City grants.

In Poznań the Estates Councils are key actors in the city's civil society. The nature of their role, the constraints on their effectiveness placed by their relative lack of financial resources and administrative problems created by working within procedures dictated by City Hall are examined in section 6.3. This includes analysis of the bidding competition for funding of local projects by the City authorities between Estates, a programme deliberately aimed at building local (financial) capacity in the city's neighbourhoods. In section 6.4, the Estate Councils' working environment is analysed, the patterns of Estate Councillors' and the community's involvement alongside the effectiveness and visibility of the Estates' Councils. As participation in community activities is treated as an indicator of civil society, passivity and its opposite, active involvement, come into focus. This leads to an analysis of social and political interaction in the Estates, focusing on the interest-based activities of

neighbourhoods and individual residents (6.5). The objective is to learn what activities are considered civic and who tends to be involved in local affairs and why. The issue of local authorities' perceiving residents' activities as 'negative' (obstructive) or 'positive' (contributory) is discussed. Citizens' involvement in local affairs can help to build local social cohesion, as well as potentially of building collaborative links with the City authorities, with the formal governmental structure. Collectively, these arguments facilitate an overview of the present situation of the Estates, their role within the city's civil society and the rationale for their possible reform (section 6.6). The chapter concludes with some more general observations on civil society.

### 6.1. Civil society: the concept and structure

This section presents the attitudes of my interviewees towards *civil society* in the context of local democracy beginning with a working definition of the term. Attention is drawn to the fact that Polish local government was born from civil society and this somewhat idealistic approach to civil society impedes a realistic evaluation of the current situation. The focus is on the organisational level of civil society groups. In a democracy civil society grows if it is given space and a friendly environment. Thus in subsection 6.1.1 the issue of communication between local government and civil society is explored.

References to civil society are inescapable within debates on democracy and democratisation. Even so, the term *civil society* is an unclear one, being a contested concept and the subject of wide-ranging viewpoints (from chapter 2 see: Audier 2006, Cohen and Arato 1992, Cox 2007, Diamond 1994, Foley and Edwards 1996, Howard 2002, Kubik 2005, Myant 2005, Putnam 1993, Ziółkowski 2005, etc.). The analysis here draws upon the working definition of civil society offered in chapter 2:

Civil society is voluntary, self-generating and gives rise to a self-governing organised social life with interest-based and issue-oriented actions of society members. In civil society informed, educated citizens are acting collectively in a public sphere using private resources to achieve public aims.

The Polish concept of local self-governance<sup>331</sup> (chapters 3 and 5) made it difficult for my interviewees to identify stakeholders in democracy other than local self-government<sup>332</sup> and citizens. At the early stage of the interviews (Interview Question 2), interviewees had

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<sup>331</sup> It strongly emphasises the *self*-governing community.

<sup>332</sup> Local government was mainly discussed in terms of representative democracy and procedural democracy.

difficulties in defining civil society outside local government and failed to acknowledge that citizens act together because they have shared interests which may be different from the local government policy<sup>333</sup>. They did not associate local democracy with a space of voluntarily organised social life. The difficulties interviewees had when asked to define ‘civil society’ were unsurprising. The 1989 mass movement ‘produced’ local government (chapter 2, subsection 2.3.2: devolution by the parliamentary Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government 1990 and free local government elections) and members of local government had problems placing themselves apart from civil society<sup>334</sup>. The legacy of the past was clearly echoed in the definition of local democracy given by Mikołajczak, Deputy Director, Public Administration Department, Ministry of Interior and Administration:

Local democracy is what was created or facilitated in the early 1990s that is the re-activation of self-government, the opportunity local residents have to take part in the decision-making processes, the re-authorisation of society to decide on various issues relevant to the community. (Mikołajczak, Deputy Director, Public Administration Department, Ministry of Interior and Administration, Interview 2007)

Local government and democracy were viewed as a manifestation of civil society. Thus, a definite majority of the interviewees perceived *local democracy* and *civil society* as mutually dependant and necessary features of a democratic system. They adhered to the view that local democracy is inseparable from civil society and that local democracy is a product of civil society. As City Councillor Przybylak (Interview 2007) argued, “civil society translates into participation in all domains of public life” and regretted that “people are not interested in taking part in activities for the benefit of the whole society”. This regret was a symptomatic reference to the ideological notion of the concept of civil society. The mayor, however, did suggest that there is a distinction between democratic society and civil society:

One can imagine a democratic society that has a democratic system but is not civil society because it does not want to [get involved]. (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007)

Most interviewees chose to offer comments on the desired relations between local government and citizens for example:

Civil society is a society in which authorities take responsibility for what is absolutely necessary that is for what the citizens themselves cannot do, for instance,

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<sup>333</sup> Compare Jałowicki (2005:5) who claims that citizens are active only in situations where their interests are jeopardised or if there is an issue that is relevant to them directly.

<sup>334</sup> Local government has been viewed as a democratic achievement of Citizens’ Committees.



building infrastructure. Local residents cannot be responsible for road construction or the provision of electric power or gas. They cannot develop the infrastructure and system of education. They can build a school building but cannot develop a complete educational system. In short, authorities must be responsible for matters that cannot be solved or pursued without their involvement. (City Hall Official 3, Interview 2007)

Initially the interviewees would rather speak about the benefits for everybody involved in local governance and emphasise the importance of collegial or joint activities for the wellbeing of the whole community. They hardly mentioned citizens' investment in a public sphere or spoke of pluralism or diversity, but agreed that local democracy feeds civil society and vice versa. To the extent that they attempted to define *civil society*, they tended to mention some of the features used in my working definition. Bojarski, for example, underlined that:

Civil society is a society that is *informed* about what is happening in the local community and tries to take part in it. (Bojarski, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region Supplement, Interview 2007)

Bojarski's narrowing of civil society to a local one was common among the interviewees (for example Dzikowski MP, Łybacka MP, City Councillor and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski, City Councillor and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Wośkowiak, Pacia from Wielkopolska Voivodship Office, Stosik from the Sic! Foundation, Bojarski and Przybylska - journalists *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region Supplement). Councillor Mączkowski set civil society apart from the state and identified civil society with an idea that 'organises' citizens so they act together:

Civil society is a success, a formula that *organises society* [...], a set of actions, events, ideas that organise people in domains *external to* the recognised achievements of *the state*. (City Councillor Mączkowski, Interview 2007)

Interestingly, while reflecting on local democracy and civil society, two Estate Councillors immediately identified Poznań *Estates* and their communities as manifestations of local democracy and civil society.

By 'local democracy' I understand the functioning of the smallest units that fulfil the needs of local communities. To give an example, in Poznań there are 68 accessory units [Estates]. Almost the entire area of Poznań is covered by them and thanks to their activities many issues highly important to local communities have been taken care of. (Wośkowiak, City Councillor and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor, Interview 2007)

I understand local democracy as follows. If a small community has a problem it can solve, the community will surely find a better solution than some higher unit like the

city council or central government. If the scale of the problem is bigger; that is too big for a local community, then higher authorities should be involved because they have the means to solve the problem. (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of Św. Łazarz Estate Council, Interview 2007)

They underlined the issue of devolution and subsidiarity which they considered fundamental to 'local democracy'. Estate Councillors like Mikołajczak (Ministry of Interior and Administration) quoted above were first to recognise a local *community* as a stakeholder in local democracy.

A community that has its objectives and which can organise itself for the purpose of satisfying its needs was the first form of civil society (correctly) recognised in the interviews. Such groups, however, are difficult to identify in a macro-scale research where the country at large is the object. Furthermore, they tend not to be recognised as elements of civil society because they are not formally constituted. The community was also identified with the *neighbourhood* :

Local democracy for me means that every person has not only the right to vote but also that they can be actively involved in what is happening in their neighbourhood, in what is relevant to them personally, their neighbours and other people living in the Estate and city. (City Councillor and Sołacz Estate Councillor Nowowiejska, Interview 2007)

*Community* and *neighbourhood* have the features given in my working definition of civil society. At this stage the only disputable issue can be the extent to which they have to be 'self-governing' and 'organised' to be called civil society organisations. The LSE Centre for Civil Society includes in its definition of civil society the following:

Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy group<sup>335</sup>.

In Poland many community groups are defined by their low level of formality (self-help groups and 'social movements') which disqualifies them from being recorded in the Klon/Jawor<sup>336</sup> data base. The Polish registries of the Ministry of the Interior and

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<sup>335</sup> LSE, Centre for Civil Society, 'What is civil society?',

[http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what\\_is\\_civil\\_society.htm](http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm), accessed 21.11.2009.

<sup>336</sup> "The Klon/Jawor Association is a non-governmental organisation that supports the Polish voluntary sector by collecting and disseminating information. As the Klon/Jawor Association is dedicated to the values of an

Administration, the Court of Justice and REGON data list only organisations of public benefit<sup>337</sup> (see subsection 2.2.2).

Civil society is dependent on social life being structured around group-based activities and preferences, a point that was only recognised by very few interviewees who actually mentioned the *structures* of civil society:

Civil society is a process of building structures of civil society and thus it is a process of involving citizens not only in the election act but also in current activities that is in what organisations, associations, or a group of residents propagating an initiative they see as locally important. (Jankowiak, Member of the Board of Wielkopolskie Voivodship, Interview 2007)

In my opinion civil society strengthens democratic society but civil society requires social involvement and needs to expand with some structures that are not part of the public authority system for instance NGOs that choose to be active outside the official authorities' structure. (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007)

According to Jankowiak a first step is that organisations whose members are concerned with local affairs must emerge and once established they may attract the interest of other citizens. His assumption is that civil society organisations become constituted once their activities are visible to local residents who offer their support and may be willing to join it. What this overlooks is that organisations of civil society are products of the existing civil society. Dzikowski MP (Interview 2007) - like Jankowiak - recognised organisations like "fire brigades, clubs of village housewives, hunting clubs and accessory units" which local government should consult<sup>338</sup> on specific local projects. Typically, such groups demonstrate social cohesion, which itself can be considered as diagnostic of the local condition of civil society. The number of organisations appears to be less informative. Sociologist Bondyra mentioned both structures and the community and argued that for civil society to function properly there is a need for:

[...] horizontal structures, relations among citizens established out of their own will, that is relations that are not based on a procedure only but emerge because the community members want to influence the operations of the authorities and thus the

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open, creative, self-organising society, we believe information and knowledge to be empowering. We further our aim by developing the Information System for Polish NGOs and providing organisations with modern communication tools." <http://english.ngo.pl/x/100973>, accessed 16.05.2009.

<sup>337</sup> See Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work (*op. cit.*). The public benefit organisation status is granted to the elite of the third sector, "providing services for the general public, and guaranteeing transparency of operations ever since the moment of registration". English version:

<http://www.pozytek.gov.pl/Public,Benefit,Organizations,554.html> accessed 01.08.2010.

<sup>338</sup> Consultations are a tool of procedural democracy and were discussed in chapter 3, section 3.4.

lot of their community. (Dr Bondyra, AMU, Department of Sociology, Local Government Research Group, Interview 2007)

He distinguished between procedural democracy, i.e. the practice of democratic procedures, and *substantive democracy* which entails social involvement drawing attention to horizontal structures (social cohesion) in a community. Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak said that for a local community to act in a democratic way:

[...] people have to know one another in some way - not only from church or by sight but from community meetings. They have to know what opinions on an issue are held by other people. (Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, Interview 2007)

The issue of social cohesion, i.e. whether and how social life is voluntarily 'organised' in Poznań becomes essential to understanding the operations of civil society in Poznań. City Councillor Ganowicz (Interview 2007) pointed to the relevance of the environment of civil society saying that local democracy "is a tool that enables society to be civil society". If the environment is reduced to local government (the legislative City Council and the executive City Hall, i.e. administration), the attitudes of local government to other stakeholders - its partners in a democratic system, may be essential to the condition of a non-rebellious civil society (compare Ziółkowski 2005, Mokrzycki 2000, Jałowicki 2005).

*Community* and *neighbourhood* were recognised by the interviewees as civil society 'organisations'. This points to the importance of the quality and not quantity of links between civil society and the political society (see chapter 2, Kubik 2005). At the same time macro-scale research based on registered civil society organisations gives questionable results. They are questionable in part because which organisation is recognised as a civil society organisation in a country depends on national legislation, self-identification of various organisations, local democratic procedures (local laws) and attitudes to the 'necessary' formality of an organisation. In Poland the most widely recognised civil society organisations are the well-established 'elite' public benefit organisations. They are most commonly identified with 'non-governmental organisations'. Possibly because there are not many of them, the term 'NGO' was hardly used in answers to questions about the nature of civil society in Poznań. However there are various NGOs in Poznań and:

Actually [...] many NGOs have a problem. Their voice is weak as one joins them out of one's free will and the membership is small. (Bojarski, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region Supplement, Interview 2007)

In Poland local democracy is primarily perceived as an achievement of civil society and distinguishing between civil society and local democracy has been difficult for my interviewees. Even though the 'phrase' *civil society* is widely used in Poland, it is indeed an unclear concept<sup>339</sup>. My Poznań interviewees identified a community, a neighbourhood, a group of citizens/residents, organisation (for example fire brigade, club of village housewives, hunting club), an association, a community-based Estate and an NGO as organisations of civil society. They associated civil society with words like influence, responsibility, activity, involvement, control and freedom. They were concerned with the level of social involvement. This included references to the level of social cohesion and the level of formality an organisation of civil society is expected to satisfy to be recognised as an organisation [*organizacja*] or institution [*instytucja*]<sup>340</sup>. It needs to be underlined that the delegation of tasks to community organisations, including Estates, i.e. the issue of subsidiarity, was considered by the interviewees as fundamental to civil society. It appears that substantive democracy corresponds to voluntary social networking for the common good. It is a point taken up later in sections 6.2 and 6.3.

#### 6.1.1. Civil society: the environment issue

Although the condition of civil society is debated in the context of procedural democracy, it is all about relations between institutionalised and non-institutionalised forms of democratic practices. Wellmer (2000:70) observed that:

[...] 'democratic practices' should be taken to include the ability or at least the readiness of the participants to experiment and to exercise their imaginations in the pursuit of appropriate solutions or forms of communal action in specific situations and in concrete contexts. (Wellmer 2000:70-71)

Since the level of formality of community, neighbourhood and a group of citizens/residents is low, the environment in which they operate is highly relevant to their activities. Authorities' attitudes to civil society organisations are critical to social participation and by extension to civil society. Facilitation of policy dialogue between civil society and local government is part of the environment. This points to the relevance of further examination of local authorities' attitudes to civil society and its development.

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<sup>339</sup> I was aware that interviewees would have difficulties talking about its content and that is why I designed a number of subsequent questions that referred to the involvement of residents in local affairs see section 6.5).

<sup>340</sup> In Polish those two words imply a high level of formality (structure, statutes, formal registration).

Society can help strengthen democracy by making local authorities accountable and more efficient (*cf.* Yoder 2003); thus the condition of local democracy gives essential insight into the process of embedding relevant practices. Interviewees were asked about the way local government of the city of Poznań shapes local civil society thus implying that in Poznań there is civil society. Also implied is that local government is in a position to shape it or encourage its development. In response, interviewees offered local government's opinions on its role for promoting civil society.

The fact that attitudes are part of the environment and have an impact on residents' inclusion in policy making was noticed by Dzikowski MP:

If local authorities do not create the right environment for co-deciding or for constructive consultations, they will alienate themselves from society. They will lose trust among their local communities. [...] Social consultations are an opportunity for more [civil society] organisations [...] to be involved and to increase the participation of those who are not members of local legislative and executive authorities in the decision-making processes. The feeling that one co-decides about actual developments spreads. I think that in such a situation the position of local authorities is stronger and they are more trusted. (Dzikowski MP, Interview 2007)

The idea that local government can or should encourage civil society met with various reactions. One respondent reacted very strongly:

So is it the City Hall that should shape civil society? [Does this question imply] that we – officials – treat people as the *szara masa* [literarily 'grey mass', derogatory > the hoi polloi] and we are here to educate the hoi polloi? Maybe we, officials are the same *szara masa*. Residents say [local government] officials are not creative. But it is not officials' task to be creative. Their job is to ensure that things do not fall apart. [...] Be it this way or another, people have to be given a chance/opportunity to act. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

The use of the phrase *szara masa*, i.e. the hoi polloi, points to a curious dissonance in the interviewee's perception of the authority (elite) and the society (commons). It suggests that the City Hall has a strong vertical structure and officials have clearly defined tasks that do not include educating the residents. However, the first part of the response can be read as plainly ironic and pointing to the leading role of citizens in a democratic state. Indeed the latter part of the response suggests the initial response was meant to be ironic. The interviewee recognised the need to encourage citizens to take initiative and influence the performance and activities of local authorities. Pucher, Deputy Chairman of Św. Łazarz Estate Council, did not see any role for local government in promoting civil society activity as he believed that civil society should be voluntary and self-generating:

Even if the local government of Poznań would like to encourage civil society activities it is not able to do so. Local government can only promote democratic procedures. [...] Local government, however, will not replace citizens in building civil society because the initiatives must be born at the bottom. (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of Św. Łazarz Estate Council, Interview 2007)

However, reflecting upon their direct experience of *civil society* in Poznań, the interviewees noticed that, as members of local authorities, they are to an extent responsible for nurturing local civil society:

I think that now we can help advance civil society to a much larger extent by involving it in the decision-making-processes, that is by using referenda. The more we involve local communities in the decision-making process at every level, the more local communities will be prone to get involved in various projects in the future. In other words, civil society is not blindly approving but creative and active. (Łybacka MP, Interview 2007)

Surely, the very operations of local government, its competences and activities are conducive to civil society growth. Surely, authorities of a *gmina*, powiat or voivodship that want to execute their mission [...] should be interested to learn and consider opinions of local residents and actively co-operate with local communities. There is a vast area of activities that can be used to additionally stimulate civil society that has been given a chance to grow. (City Councillor and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski, Interview 2007)

The above quotations point to the recognition of the space that needs to be given to civil society to be active (procedural democracy) that is *self-generating*, and to the *voluntary* character of civil society's activities. Members of civil society need to know how to proceed, i.e. to be *educated*. Senator Ziółkowski (Interview 2007) underlined that civil society should be *informed*<sup>341</sup> about the activities of local government and local authorities should facilitate the flow of information.

Being informed results from information spread underlining the relevance of effective communication between the authority and the citizens (see chapter 3, section 3.2 (e.g. Sakowicz 2002:5). Restricted or limited access to information is a potential threat to local democracy. If it is restricted or limited, the feedback will be offered only by the group provided with complete information<sup>342</sup>. The threat is that gradually this group may be recognised by the local authorities as their only partner.

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<sup>341</sup> Note that the words 'informed' and 'educated' are used in my working definition of civil society.

<sup>342</sup> In 2001 Swianiewicz warned that: "[...] the idea of a wide inclusion of residents in decision-making processes is controversial. [...] it may weaken mechanisms of representative democracy and it entails the

The threat is that if those contacts become too institutionalised, a kind of clique will be formed and civil society will actually become a part of the authorities. For instance the local government may always contact one ecological organisation and even though this organisation is a representative of civil society it will be ‘licensed’ by local government. [...] open meetings with citizens are useful but it is the citizens who should organise them. (Senator Ziółkowski, Interview 2007)

The worry about ‘institutionalisation and licensing’ of some partners by local authorities expressed by Ziółkowski is the worry about potential favouritism. The roots of his concern may be due to the fast pace of local government politicisation and the slower pace at which residents organise themselves. The threat of favouritism may be real in a static situation where a civil society group dominates. A potential threat is countered with the civil society’s dialogue with local authorities. If democracy is based on an open debate, the space may be used by various groups to control public authorities.

The facilitation of dialogue is part of ‘the environment’. For Dzikowski MP the process of shaping civil society by local authorities through a dialogue was concurrent with the process of shaping local authorities by civil society.

It is extremely important to create situations which facilitate local residents’ active participation in governance. This includes direct contacts, giving floor to the residents, being in touch with the residents on regular basis, and not avoiding meetings [...]. (Dzikowski MP, Interview 2007)

The quality of the dialogue has an impact on local elections which Dzikowski called a “periodic evaluation” performed by electors. Councillors involvement in the dialogue points to “the growth of the sense of accountability among local authorities” (Dzikowski MP, Interview 2007).

If the space for dialogue is granted, civil society’s initiatives are more likely to be heard, this in turn influencing whether the local authority can identify likely partners:

Civic initiatives are likely to be born when local communities have directly experienced a dialogue situation; that is when local residents see that authorities want to talk with them. And the pattern is not that Mr. Smith has an idea and goes to the Mayor. Now Mr. Smith first speaks to his neighbours or people who share his concerns and they go to the Mayor together. That is one pattern of encouraging the founding of organisations which co-operate with local authorities. Another pattern is that the local government wants to help some particular social groups, for instance children with disabilities or, generally, underprivileged children and looks for groups

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threat that small but most active and best organised groups may exert an excessive impact on making a decision.” (Swianiewicz 2001b:63) [trans. OM].



of citizens who have taken initiatives and developed programmes of assistance to the underprivileged children. Such groups identified by local government get the money from the local government's budget and their initiatives are strengthened. The two patterns described are forms of dialogue. (Jankowiak, Member of the Board of Wielkopolskie Voivodship, Interview 2007)

It follows that the dialogue need not be limited to authorities and institutionalised forms, i.e. registered organisations of civil society. What matters is the level of involvement of residents in public affairs.

Our understanding of what civil society is and how it manifests itself is dynamic. The biggest change, potentially for the better for local democracy, is the increasing 'depth' of civil society's involvement. Journalist Przybylska gave an example:

I have been monitoring the work of local government for 8 years now. At first [...] when local inhabitants protested against something, for instance against closing a school down, their arguments were mainly emotional. Today not only emotional arguments are used. People living in one area present cost analyses of various solutions, they present their own proposals if, for instance, they want to change the route of a road. At present there is a heated debate about the Poznań ring road which is to run through residential areas. And local residents offer alternative solutions that are a bit more expensive but supported with arguments, say, ecological arguments. Thus truly emotional clashes are more rare and more attention is paid to factual arguments. (Przybylska, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region Supplement, Interview 2007)

The attitudes of local authorities towards *civil society* (debated in the context of local democracy and my working definition of the term) appeared to be mainly positive though they were highly conditioned by the level of citizens' involvement in public affairs. *Local democracy* and *civil society* were perceived as mutually dependant and necessary features of a democratic system. In general it was agreed that local democracy feeds civil society and vice versa. A supportive legal framework plus co-operative attitude on the part of local government, i.e. the friendly environment, was seen as essential to the condition of civil society. The issue of social cohesion, i.e. whether and how social life is voluntarily 'organised' in Poznań was identified as essential to diagnosing the vibrancy of Poznań civil society.

## 6.2. NGOs as partners of local authorities

This section explores further the relationships between the Poznań authorities and civil society organisations. These organisations vary considerably from well-established foundations to small associations [*stowarzyszenie*]. Their cooperation with the authorities can be financial, non-financial and advisory, however, in this section the focus is on the first where the decision was taken to review the data on which organisations apply for City grants. This was based on the premise that such organisations are the more likely for local authorities to treat them as partners<sup>343</sup>. Municipal grant competitions are linked with the issue of delegation of certain tasks from the level of local authorities to NGOs. As a civil society organisation needs not be registered as a public benefit organisation to be eligible for grant-aiding, it was assumed this would produce more reliable data on the involvement of ‘groups of citizens’ in public affairs and on the level of the groups’ formality.

Cooperation between NGOs and local authorities can be non-financial and financial. Non-financial forms of cooperation refer mainly to facilitating the spreading of information, assistance in organising the bodies representing NGOs to strengthen their operations and provision of training relevant to NGOs. As one respondent argued:

Actually, local government supports NGOs by giving them a place for their offices that is an address. It supports their actions and expresses interest in their work. (Łybacka MP, Interview 2007)

Financial cooperation can take two forms: public tasks can be subcontracted to NGOs (delegated by the City authorities) or NGOs present their own projects in areas designated by the City Council whose realisation may be supported by local authorities<sup>344</sup>. Local authorities can subcontract the execution of some local government’s tasks to NGOs via competitions. It is the City Council which decides what tasks can be ‘delegated’. The execution cost of a delegated task is fully covered (100%) with the City money. Examples

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<sup>343</sup> The problem of data on NGOs is repeatedly reported by the Poznań City Hall in its reports on the City cooperation with NGOs e.g. \_\_\_\_ (2010) ‘*Sprawozdanie z realizacji Rocznego Programu Współpracy Miasta Poznania z Organizacjami Pozarządowymi na 2009 rok*’ [Report on the realisation of the Annual Programme of Co-operation between the City of Poznań and Non-Governmental Organisations in 2009], City Hall of Poznań, Health Care Provision and Social Care Department, Miejski Informator Multimedialny, [Multimedia City Guide], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/ngo/attachments.html?co=show&instance=1017&parent=38818&lang=pl&id=79918>, accessed 20.08.2010.

<sup>344</sup> In both cases financial subsidies follow, however, they cannot be used for the purchase of equipment, land, to support business activities and to run the office of an NGO, or to carry out political or religious activities.

of delegated tasks in social care and sports include provision of shelter, meals and clothing to the homeless and provision of swimming classes for eight and nine year olds. NGOs can also compete for grants for their own projects in areas defined by the City Council provided that they are able to finance at least 30% of the project. Table 6.1 presents both tasks which were delegated and projects which were supported by local authorities in 2007.

Table 6.1 The City of Poznań and NGO cooperation, 2007

Task/project area	Expenditure (PLN)	No. of projects submitted	% of all projects chosen	No. of all projects chosen	No. of successful NGOs
<b>Delegated tasks</b>					
Social care:	12,584,802	25	2.10	23	18
Sports:	1,620,000	3	0.25	2	2
<b>NGOs own projects</b>					
Social care	8,642,470	155	12.99	92	80
Support to the disabled	2,297,039	210	17.60	81	81
Health care and prevention	501,673	32	2.68	16	16
Fighting alcoholism	2,605,920	237	19.87	74	60
Fighting drug addiction	37,543	8	0.67	3	3
Entrepreneurship	133,195	21	1.76	11	8
Education	177,048	35	2.93	20	19
Sports	6,814,900	230	19.28	187	161
Tourism/leisure	155,152	23	1.93	17	16
Consumer rights	0	0	0.00	0	0
Culture and heritage	4,361,023	214	17.94	146	124
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39,930,768</b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>588</b>
International Sports and Culture projects:					
- MALTA festival	1,000,000	1	-	1	1
- other international and national events in Poznań	1,315,081	50	-	33	26

Source: Based on the List of NGOs that received subsidies in 2007, City Hall of Poznań<sup>345</sup>

The number of organisations which have successfully applied for City grants is much higher than the number of the elite public benefit organisations<sup>346</sup>. According to a report published by Poznań City Hall in 2007 there were 1,193 project applications from NGOs and other entities entitled to subsidies to carry out public tasks. Some NGOs submitted several project applications. Ultimately 588 organisations were awarded local government subsidies for 672 projects. The total expenditure of civil society organisations in Poznań in

<sup>345</sup> The Portal ngo.pl, *Bazy danych organizacji pozarządowych*, 'Wykaz dotacji' [NGOs' database. List of subsidies], <http://bazy.ngo.pl/download/2008-75832-2007dotacje.pdf>, accessed 15.05.2009.

<sup>346</sup> The number of the elite public benefit organisations, i.e. those entitled to 1% of personal income tax is low in Poland. In May 2009 the record of public benefit organisations in Poznań entitled to the 1% donations deducted from taxpayers income tax was 166 according to the Jawor/Klon database (see chapter 2, section 2.2). In November 2004, *Gazeta Wyborcza* wrote that in Poznań there were nearly 3,000 non-governmental organisations and about 200 of them were awarded City grants. \_\_\_\_ (2004) 'Organizacje Pozarządowe w Poznaniu' [NGOs in Poznań], *Gazeta Wyborcza On-line, Poznań City Supplement*, 11 November, <http://miasta.gazeta.pl/poznan/1,36037,2387023.html>, accessed 15.05.2009.

2007 amounted to nearly 63 million PLN, including 40 million PLN in grants from the City Hall (Table 6.1 above). The municipal grant for NGOs in Poznań in 2007 was three times larger than in 2003 (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2 NGO City of Poznań Grants (2003-2007)

Year	Grants (PLN)
2003	13,173,227
2004	15,017,004
2005	24,727,992
2006	30,242,116
2007	39,930,769

Source: City Hall of Poznań<sup>347</sup>

In 2007, NGOs covered 36% of the project costs with their own money. Nearly 12,000 people were involved, including 5,000 volunteers, in the realisation of the projects.

As Table 6.1 suggests NGOs in Poznań are mainly active in the area of sports, culture and social care:

In Poznań the third sector [non-governmental] is very strong, in particular in the area of social care and health protection but also in the area of culture and national heritage protection. (City Councillor Mączkowski, Interview 2007)

The number of NGOs active in these areas is the highest (as is the number of projects submitted and chosen). Most projects are small scale, particularly in terms of the amount of money required for their implementation. Effectively, this means that more organisations can be awarded grants. Yet, this dispersal may bring its own problems – as one councillor expressed it - the high number of organisations that receive subsidies is worrying in that public money gets ‘scattered’, limiting what can be achieved. His priority was in ensuring that local authority grant aid should benefit as many citizens as possible. However, small NGOs concerned with small size local developments may meet local needs best. Cultural associations and sports clubs are usually well organised which helps them competently apply for grants. In 2007 successful projects included e.g. provision of regular sports training for young by Youth Sports Centres (2,395,000 PLN), sporting events of local, national and international outreach (769,600 PLN), European Championships EuroBasket

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<sup>347</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2008) *‘Współpraca Miasta Poznania z organizacjami pozarządowymi na podstawie sprawozdania za rok 2007’* [The City of Poznań’s cooperation with NGOs in the light of the 2007 report] City Hall of Poznań, Health Care Provision and Social Care Department, Miejski Informator Multimedialny, [Multimedia City Guide], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/ngo/attachments.html?co=show&instance=1017&parent=32925&lang=pl&id=68946>, accessed 17.05.2009.

(1,250,000 PLN), participation of leading Poznań sports teams in league games (1,700,000 PLN). Among the organisations that successfully applied for grants were also small school sports clubs.

How the City allocated grants in 2007 is based on the City Council's Act of 11 July 2006<sup>348</sup>. The Act identified areas in which the City would financially cooperate with NGOs. In this way "the city authorities use competitions to encourage the articulation of ideas that NGOs want to pursue" (Councillor Mączkowski, Interview 2007). Senator Alexandrowicz agreed:

[...] NGOs that have been active for at least a year have the right to apply for grants to the City Hall. This is how City authorities encourage local residents to be active: organise yourselves, found an organisation and when you do something valuable, next year you stand a chance to get a grant. (Senator Alexandrowicz, Interview 2007)

A similar opinion was presented Stuligrosz MP who drew attention to the Council's educational role in the context of the financial support given to NGOs.

Consciously securing pre-defined financial resources in the City budget for social or cultural activities, for assisting people with disabilities, the unemployed and other underprivileged residents, the council fosters awareness of the need to help others. (Stuligrosz MP, Interview, 2007)

However, the fact that the City authorities give NGOs the opportunity to participate in grant competitions to which public money is dedicated does not automatically make NGOs true partners with local government. For the mayor local government in Poznań cooperates productively with NGOs in the areas of social care and culture. Many projects and some tasks that can be delegated are "largely funded from the City budget and are carried out by NGOs" (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007). Although such delegation has proved important in Polish local government reforms after 1989, the mayor's opinions can be questioned where his positive comments contrasted with other opinion. For example:

In a huge organisational structure like the City Office, the inertia level is very high. Around 1,000 people work here. And if we let the bureaucracy grow, we will lose touch with real life. The passing of competences and financial means to NGOs is meeting with resistance in the City Hall but I think gradually the situation will improve and the cooperation will advance. (City Hall Official 3, Interview 2007)

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<sup>348</sup> Poznań City Council's Act, on the 2007 Cooperation Programme of the City of Poznań and NGOs and bodies listed in Article 1, item 3 of the [parliamentary] Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work of 24 April 2003, dated 11 July 2006, No. XCIX/1126/IV/2006 [http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/uchwaly.html?co=print&uc\\_id\\_uchwaly=14657&p=](http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/uchwaly.html?co=print&uc_id_uchwaly=14657&p=), accessed 19.09.2009.

Journalist Przybylska was highly critical about the level of cooperation between the city authorities and NGOs and said that frequently NGOs have been founded to address particular problems with which the authorities are unable or incapable to cope effectively. These NGOs are replacing local authorities by delivering some services to the citizens. She said:

In Poland it somehow works this way that the more active NGOs are, the more the City wants to get rid off some tasks and throw the burden on NGOs' shoulders. (Przybylska, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region Supplement, Interview 2007)

Such an attitude suggests that the City authorities do not treat NGOs as true partners.

Many interviewees shared the view that NGOs can be more effective in achieving public goals than the administration. This may be because NGOs have a different motivation, frequently personal, and their activities are voluntary. Hence their involvement is much deeper than that of the City Office employees.

[...] the difference between an official and a volunteer taking care of, say, the homeless is that the official does it because it is part of his/her duties defined in the work contract and the volunteer does it because s/he is motivated and wants to do it. Thus their motivation is very different. (Łybacka MP, Interview 2007)

I have a feeling that the cooperation should be tighter because NGOs may well use the means more effectively than various municipal units. (Councillor Ganowicz, Interview 2007)

Another councillor stressed that Polish democracy is young and spoke about the unsatisfactory level of activism due to the lack of experience of many NGOs. In such a situation passing communal tasks to NGOs needs to be approached with caution.

In mature democracies NGOs give birth to a huge majority of great projects. In Poland we lag far behind. What is needed is partnership. NGOs are still weak. They are in their early stages. Passing on some tasks to NGOs is risky particularly because organisationally NGOs are weak and have little experience. (City Councillor Lewandowski, Interview 2007)

This view was supported by another councillor who noticed that the cooperation:

[...] is weakest in the area of natural environment protection. This is so because [...] there only 5 or 6 ecology oriented NGOs. But there is space for NGOs that want to be active. (City Councillor Mączkowski, Interview 2007)

In reality NGOs concentrate on what they identify as important and their experience and contributions to local progress should not be underestimated. NGOs are active in different areas which differ in outreach and scope.

In 2007 the distribution of grants among NGOs was as follows: 28,696,098 PLN was awarded to associations, 4,267,925 PLN to foundations and 6,966,744 PLN to other organisations<sup>349</sup>. The category of associations covers associations and ‘common’ associations [*stowarzyszenie zwykłe*]. A ‘common’ association is not a juristic person<sup>350</sup> and is registered at the poviát level. It suffices that it has 3 members (physical persons only). This type of associations is the most common form of registration of a group of citizens e.g. Association of Community Parking Lot Users at Bohaterów II Wojny Światowej Estate, Association for Storm Water Drainage on Kościelżyńska Street<sup>351</sup>. In 2008 in the registry of Poznań City Hall there were 392 ‘common’ associations. An association, on the other hand is a juristic person. It must have at least 15 members and be registered in the National Court Registry. Both kinds of associations may apply for grants and cooperate with the City authorities (see also subsection 6.5.1).

Councillor Ganowicz (Interview 2007) claimed that “In essence the cooperation follows from procedures.” (i.e. allocation of money in the annual Budget Act of the City Council and grant competitions). Which organisations win grants is decided by special commissions composed of 2 representatives of the City Hall, 3 representatives of the City Council and 2-5 representatives from the NGOs<sup>352</sup>.

Not all aspects of grant competitions seem to be fully transparent. Table 6.1 shows a disparity between the subsidies given to organisers or co-organisers of international and national cultural events and subsidies given in support of truly local activities. Two of the interviewees commented upon big NGOs which carry out large scale projects. They negatively assessed the procedural aspect of the cooperation stating that though local authorities declare the transparency of all procedures, in reality some NGOs are favoured

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<sup>349</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2008) ‘Współpraca Miasta Poznania z organizacjami pozarządowymi na podstawie sprawozdania za rok 2007’ [The City of Poznań’s cooperation with NGOs in the light of the 2007 report], Power Point Presentation, City Hall of Poznań, Health Care Provision and Social Care Department, Miejski Informator Multimedialny, [Multimedia City Guide], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/publikacje/attachments.html?co=show&instance=1017&parent=23236&lang=pl&id=52271>, accessed 03.12.2009.

<sup>350</sup> For the definition see: The Portal ngo.pl, ‘Co to jest stowarzyszenie zwykłe? Jak się je tworzy i jak działa?’ [What is a common association? How to found it and how does it work?], <http://poradnik.ngo.pl/x/340827>, accessed 03.12.2009.

<sup>351</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2008) ‘Rejestr Stowarzyszeń Zwykłych’ [The register of common associations], City Hall of Poznań, Miejski Informator Multimedialny, [Multimedia City Guide], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/publikacje/pages.html?co=list&id=281&ch=2262&instance=1017&lang=pl>, ZALACZNIK\_1.DOC, accessed 03.12.2009.

<sup>352</sup> Poznań City Council’s Act on approving The City of Poznań and NGOs’ Cooperation Charter, dated 26 September 2006, No. CIII/1201/IV/2006.

over others. The 'favoured' ones either have well known founders (Przybylska, Interview 2007) or are bigger (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007):

Some organisations are privileged because they have more respected founders than others. In theory when applying for grants all organisations are treated alike but if organisation A is better known, the City favours it. This is wrong. The importance and quality of projects matter, and not who presents them. (Przybylska, journalist, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poznań Region supplement, Interview 2007)

Unfortunately bigger organisations have less difficulties getting support than smaller organisations. That's politics. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

The most frequently given example of a favoured organisation was the well established MALTA International Festival Foundation the founders of which are all well known in Poznań and include the Kulczyk family. In 2007 Mr Kulczyk was judged to be the 9<sup>th</sup> richest Pole by *Forbes*<sup>353</sup>. The mayor chairs the Foundation Council since 2004. MALTA Festival is a huge international annual event which is costly. The Foundation is cited by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage as an example of good practice in terms of effectively winning sponsorship from business entities. MALTA International Theatre Festival was awarded 1 million PLN in 2005, 2006 and 2007 from the City budget. The claim about it being favoured depends on the perception of the importance of the Festival to Poznań as a cultural centre and of the status of its founders, and the personal involvement of the mayor.

In addition to financial and non-financial forms, there are other forms of cooperation between the City authorities and civil society organisations. NGOs are given space to advise local government. The readiness of City Councillors to involve NGOs in governing the City includes inviting representatives of NGOs to the Council sittings.

[The local government], invites people who as members of civil society are dealing with a currently debated issue to the Council sessions or sessions of the Council Committees. (Łybacka MP, Interview 2007)

The relevance of NGOs' participation in open sittings was explained by Councillor Mączkowski:

An interested person, representatives of any civil society organisation may join the sittings and voice their opinions though they cannot vote as they are guests. They can, however, ask a councillor they know to transfer his or her right to vote at a sitting to them and thus directly shape opinions or decisions of the city authorities.

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<sup>353</sup> Forbest Rich List, <http://www.forbes.com/lists/2006/10/KK5Y.html>, accessed 19.12.2008.



Many councillors come forward with such initiatives and they meet with self-governing organisations. Regular meetings lead to the establishment of working groups. I have established two working groups to work on nature conservation by asking NGOs to join our teams. (City Councillor Mączkowski, Interview 2007)

Recently the City authorities recognised the need to facilitate better contacts with civil society organisations. In 2004 the Department Supporting the City Accessory Units (Estates) was introduced into the structure of the City administration (see chapter 1, Figure 1.5). Its role is to help Estate Councillors and the City administration with the workload. Furthermore, in 2007 a plenipotentiary for NGOs was appointed.

Councillor Kręglewski and Sadowski from the Barka Foundation (see below) commented upon another form of cooperation between NGOs and the City of Poznań namely the City Advisory Board for Public Benefit Activities [*Miejska Rada Pożytku Publicznego*] appointed in January 2007. The Board has 15 members and issues opinions and advises the mayor on proposed local Acts that refer to NGOs, the implementation of the Acts as well as on the local government's Annual Cooperation Programmes with NGOs. Five of the members represent the City Council of Poznań, five represent the Mayor of Poznań and the remaining five have been chosen from among members of NGOs. For Councillor Kręglewski, the Advisory Board 'gathers' together representatives of NGOs, which he described as "clients of our budget because they reach for various grants or other money allocated to social activities" (Interview 2007). He perceived the Advisory Board as a forum at which authorities can learn of the expectations of NGOs. Sadowski from the Barka Foundation was very critical of the Board, especially with regards to its composition as only 5 out of the 15 members are from NGOs<sup>354</sup>. At the time of the interview (8 May 2007) he judged the situation in Poznań to be "tragic as it had taken almost two years to establish the Advisory Board and it has not held any sittings yet" (Sadowski, Interview 2007). The fact that Poznań Board was established 3 years after the National Advisory Board for Public Benefit Activities which commenced its work in November 2003 irritated Sadowski. In this context he drew attention to the introduction of The Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work<sup>355</sup> (see chapter 2, subsection 2.2.2) in 2003 which introduced the National Advisory Board for Public Benefit Activities.

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<sup>354</sup> The proportion is different in the case of the national Advisory Board in which NGOs are more strongly represented.

<sup>355</sup> Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work (*op. cit.*).

The Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work was actually forcefully advocated by NGOs, precisely because of the lack of cooperation with the administration. We had to force it because local government would not read its tasks listed in the Local Government Act and would not know that local authorities should cooperate with NGOs and enhance socio-economic activities. (Sadowski, Barka Foundation, Interview 2007)

The Poznań Board had its first sitting on 26 April 2007 and by mid July it had already held five sittings (i.e. at the time transcripts of the interview was made). A representative of the Barka Foundation has been a Board member since the 3 April 2007. Although the cooperation has advanced, Sadowski suggested that I “should emphasise” that in his opinion civil society in Poland “is a dream, a bottom-up activism frequently not acceptable to the local government”. His reaction appears to have been driven by his desire for higher quality of cooperation. It has to be remembered that the democratic transformation was very fast and complex and that since 1989 virtually all parliamentary Acts have been new and later amended. The very fact that NGOs successfully advocated the introduction of the Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work, which has also been amended after its introduction in 2003, speaks for the strength of civil society in Poland.

Civil society organisations do cooperate with local authorities in many areas. Stosik from the Sic! Foundation<sup>356</sup> mentioned their project ‘Local Centres of Partnership’ supported financially by Poznań’s local authorities. The aim of the project is to encourage and increase the activities of local communities, to strengthen the sense of co-responsibility and the mutual dependence of everybody involved in “fostering a local identity by strengthening local cooperation among various sectors in their activities contributing to the wellbeing of the local community” (Stosik, Sic! Foundation, Interview 2007). This is an example of the support given by the City for activities aimed at encouraging the involvement of civil society in various developments in the city.

Our project is a good example that the authorities want to shape civil society and that this is an objective of the city authorities’ policy. The project is co-financed by the City Hall. The project is a response to local needs recognised by the City Hall. (Stosik, Sic! Foundation, Interview 2007)

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<sup>356</sup> The SIC! Foundation and its Social Innovation Centre are civil society initiatives the goal of which is to support best solutions for social work carried out by local government, associations and foundations by using the potential of civil society as well as by involving business entities and educational institutions. The Centre supports advancing local social policy and co-operates with the institutions of local government and NGOs. The SIC! Foundation, <http://www.sic.to/indexen.php?page=4>, accessed 30.05.2009.

Poznań's authorities cooperate with Barka Foundation on e.g. the construction of new housing facilities for the homeless in a post-industrial area of Poznań. The mission of the Barka Foundation is to fight poverty and social exclusion<sup>357</sup>. According to Sadowski from Barka Foundation, City Hall does not value NGOs enough.

Poznań's local government would prefer to be involved in macroeconomics at the regional level, in large projects, large airports. Society-oriented activities are not perceived by local government as something indispensable. We, the NGOs, are creating a social network from the very bottom. We try to teach networking. (Sadowski, Barka Foundation, Interview 2007)

In the totalitarian state hardly anything was public in a democratic sense. Civil society's networking was considered anti-state and punished. Since 1989 the life of everybody in Poland has changed. Many were negatively affected by the privatisation of state companies in the 1990s and lost their jobs. Some have become homeless. Though their problems were noticed early there was no panacea. The answer was to 'take care of oneself' [*wziąć sprawy w swoje ręce*] and become active in the free market economy. Not everybody managed and it was people like Sadowski who decided, back in 1989, to start helping the most needy. The Barka Foundation was founded in 1990. It is a public benefit organisation. In 2004 its budget was close to 5 million PLN including 2,286,269 in grants and 1,536,147 PLN in donations<sup>358</sup>. In 2007 it was close to 7 million PLN<sup>359</sup>. The range and outreach of its activities has increased since 2004 when Poland became member state of the EU. The Foundation successfully applies for EU grants and has expanded its activities to other countries. It is active in the UK where it mostly offers support to homeless Poles encouraging them to go back to Poland. The budget and outreach of the Foundation speaks for its strength.

Concluding this section there are a number of trends that help indicate how, and to what extent NGOs are brought into the governmental process and treated as partners by Poznań local authority. As was made clear in Poznań there many more NGOs than are listed in the

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<sup>357</sup> "Its mission is to offer support for the social development of excluded groups, build conditions to enable them to rebuild their lives by creating a system of mutual help, education and entrepreneurship, in line with a citizens' society.", The Barka Foundation For the Mutual Help [*Barka Fundacja Pomocy Wzajemnej*], <http://barka.org.pl/node/115>, accessed 04.07.2010.

<sup>358</sup> The Barka Foundation 'Annual Report 2005', [http://www.barka.org.pl/sprawozdanie\\_barka\\_2005.doc](http://www.barka.org.pl/sprawozdanie_barka_2005.doc), accessed 16.05.2009.

<sup>359</sup> The Barka Foundation, 'Annual Report 2007', [http://www.barka.org.pl/roczne\\_sprawozdanie\\_z\\_dzialalnosci\\_Barki\\_2007.pdf](http://www.barka.org.pl/roczne_sprawozdanie_z_dzialalnosci_Barki_2007.pdf), accessed 16.05.2009.

national registries. Some are registered at the powiat level only<sup>360</sup>. The number of NGO inspired projects subsidised from the City budget is impressive a number which has grown steeply in the last few years. Among NGOs successfully applying for City grants are well established NGOs and small 'common' associations. They have been recognised by local authorities as partners. Arguments suggesting that grants given to small NGOs mean an excessive diffusion of public money should be treated with caution. Small NGOs dedicate their projects to small communities and collectively their impress on the city is significant. By definition small associations have limited financial means and will tend to apply for small grants, whereas the opposite is likely for the large NGOs. This is the reason for the disparity between the subsidies given to organisers or co-organisers of international and national cultural events and subsidies given in support of truly local activities. The scope and outreach of large NGOs should not be ignored however, and due care should be taken to ensure that their cooperation with Poznań authorities is fully transparent. It might be considered essential to the embedding of partnership. The issue of delegating local government tasks to NGOs was criticised. Part of the criticism stems from NGOs' being young and having little experience. There is also the issue of inefficiency of the City administration. Active NGOs substitute for the City administration. Overall the NGOs provide an important function – criticism of them was relatively rare and indeed there was the view that NGOs can be more effective in achieving public goals than local government.

Partnership between local government and NGOs is ongoing and deepening. In 2008, 60% of residents of the Wielkopolskie Voivodship donated 1% of their personal income tax, i.e. nearly 25 million PLN to NGOs<sup>361</sup>. In 2007 the authorities of Poznań allocated 40 million PLN in grants to NGOs. In 2008 and 2009, 51 million PLN and 60 million PLN respectively were allocated to grants. These figures point to a strong position of NGOs and civil society in the area.

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<sup>360</sup> In Poznań, which has the powiat status, 'common' associations are registered in the City Hall.

<sup>361</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2009) 'Przełącz 1% podatku na organizacje pożytku publicznego' [Donate 1% of your personal income tax to the public benefit organisation], 19 March, [Portal Epoznan](http://www.epoznan.pl/index.php?section=news&subsection=news&id=13089), <http://www.epoznan.pl/index.php?section=news&subsection=news&id=13089>, accessed 20.05.2009.

### 6.3. Estates

Estates can be investigated both as accessory units of local government and as an organised and voluntary form of social life. As demonstrated in chapter 5 (*cf.* 5.1, 5.3.4 and 5.4.2), the interviewees clearly identified Estates as a form of organised social life alongside NGOs. In this section I analyse the condition of Poznań's civil society focusing on the Estates. First the status of Estates is widely investigated and discussed (see also chapter 1 and chapter 3, section 3.4). Subsection 6.3.1 elaborates on the execution of the Estates' tasks focusing on the financial resources of Estate Councils, their procedures and expenditure/investments.

The actual process of establishing Estates has many of the main characteristics of civil society included in my working definition: it was voluntary, self-generating and gave rise to self-governing organised social life. At the beginning of the 1990s, residents of Poznań were given an opportunity to establish their Estates and elect their Councils. One of the main objectives of local authorities in Poznań was to create an environment conducive to the functioning of Estate Councils as bodies that would assist the City authorities. The argument was that Estates "should be the first reference for local residents where, in a city like Poznań, it is difficult to reach councillors" (Lewandowski, City Councillor and Chairman of the Municipal Commission for Estate Elections, Interview 2007).<sup>362</sup> The City Council decided to follow the arm's length principle and wanted Estate Councils to be "the organ [part of authorities] closest to local communities" (Woškowiak, City and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor, Interview 2007). Consequently the City Council created frames for a new organised form of civil society, giving the citizens an opportunity to be engaged in decision-making processes within the city. Poznań City Council presented their proposal to residents explaining how they could become active through the Estate Councils.

The proposal was supported with arguments. You, the members of local communities, will be asked to give opinions on all projects that will affect your area. You will get a small amount of money to carry out administrative work. You will get an office from the City where you can work; it will be a room in a local school building or in another municipal property building. But foremost you will get real money to organise various activities for the benefit of all local residents, for children, senior citizens, etc. (Senator Alexandrowicz, Interview 2007)

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<sup>362</sup> Poznań is a spatially diverse city (chapter 1) with population over 567,882 (2005).

The idea of Estate Councils was dated back by the interviewees to the Citizens' Committees that were part of the Solidarity movement from which most councillors elected in the first free local elections originated.

Civil society in Poznań started to be consciously shaped by local authorities, right at the beginning of the new Polish democratic state in 1991. In parts of Poznań sub-local level Estate Councils were elected. [...] Estate Councils are a clear signal that *obywatelskość*<sup>363</sup> [informed citizenship] is not amassed at and limited to the level of the City Council that governs the city of 600,000 inhabitants. *Obywatelskość* [taking responsibility] is being passed to a lower level; that is to Estate Councils. (Stuligrosz MP, Interview 2007)

It was the City Council's initiative to allow for the establishment of Estates, however, it was up to a local community to decide if it wanted to establish its own Estate. NGOs often come into existence to meet certain social needs not met by the authorities. Residents' motivations for establishing Estates were similar. City Hall Official 4 suggested one common rationale:

The reasoning was that there were local problems that could probably be dealt with more effectively at the sub-local level and that the community acting as a group would more strongly voice their needs. Finally there were hopes that the Estate approved by the *gmina* would be an organisation respected by the authorities and thus its Council would be more effective than a single citizen. (City Hall Official 4, Interview 2007)

City and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski (Interview 2007) added that the Estates have helped strengthen "the sense of *obywatelskość* [informed citizenship]" in Poznań. At this point it needs to be remembered that the concept of *obywatelskość* (cf. chapter 4) needed to be re-introduced after 1989 as it had vanished under communism. For Councillors Kręglewski and Chudobiecki granting the citizens of Poznań the opportunity to found self-governing Estates was a conscious experiment within the legislative framework defining the newly designed democratic system of governance. Estate Councils were a democratic 'tool' given to local communities.

We opted for the experiment with Estate Councils in 1990 and our pattern has been copied in other municipalities. [...] The original point was that we wanted to create an environment that would be friendly to lobbying for solving problems of small communities the needs of which were likely to be overlooked by the City Council. (City Councillor Kręglewski, Interview 2007)

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<sup>363</sup> See chapter 4, section 4.6 for the discussion of translation equivalence.

I am speaking here about the first term of the Poznań City Council when everything had to be done from scratch. [...] Most things, with the exception of things covered in the 1990 Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government, were not regulated by law. And we created the opportunity to found the so-called Estates. This option was outlined in the 1990 Act but the Act was imprecise and it was not clear how Estates could be formed or identified. Different cities followed different paths. We decided that Estates should be established on the initiative of small local communities that means if there was a group of people who wished to identify their living area with an Estate and if the group got wide support, they could present the City Council with a petition to establish an Estate in their area. There were no real limitations except for the Estate to cover one area and a few other limitations referring to the Estate cohesion. There were no thresholds in terms of population size and thus in Poznań there are Estates with populations of several hundred residents and 30,000 residents. The latter are the size of a large *gmina* [the smallest administrative territorial unit] but since they are within the municipality they do not have *gmina* status<sup>364</sup>. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

The first Estate in Poznań was established in 1991. In Poland the issue of sub-dividing cities into smaller units was solved in two ways (see Table 6.3 below). It has already been underlined that in Poznań, residents were given the option to organise themselves into Estates. The self-identification of residents with a community was essential and the population and area of an Estate reflect that identification. Of the other four biggest Polish cities<sup>365</sup>, only Łódź opted for Estates established on the basis of citizens' initiative. The other way of sub-dividing cities was to take an administrative decision and define the borders of city 'districts' from the top, i.e. the decision was made by the City Council. (All councils of sub-local units are elected.)

In Poznań local communities wanted to self-govern and take responsibility for developments in their Estates.

It was an initiative 'from the bottom' meaning that local residents decided what territory their Estate Council was to cover. And indeed in the first years the establishment of Estate Councils was spontaneous and the involvement of local residents was high. And in Poznań the effort was truly selfless, that is for *publico bono*. (City Hall Official 4, Interview 2007)

There are some areas of Poznań where Estates have not been established because no initiative was taken there by the local populations. (They are in white in Figure 1.6<sup>366</sup>.)

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<sup>364</sup> The Estate is not a juristic person which means that its budget and expenditure are part of the City budget.

<sup>365</sup> Warsaw is different. It consists of *gminas*.

<sup>366</sup> See Figure 1.6 in chapter 1 and compare it with the map at: '*Mapa jednostek pomocniczych - stan na 1.01.2010*' [Map of accessory units – valid on 1.01.2010], *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide],

The status (competences and responsibilities) of Estate Councils are disputed in Poznań. There are questions about whether their role is advisory to the City authorities, whether they are part of the government structure or are defined more properly as part of civil society. The statutes of the City of Poznań, i.e. the Poznań City Charter<sup>367</sup> reads that “The Estate shall be a self-governing community of Estate residents” (Article 37, item 3) and that “The legislative authority of the Estate shall be the Estate Council [...]” (Article 38, item 1). The terms ‘self-governing’ and ‘legislative authority’ provides Estates with apparently significant power. Estate Councils are extensions of the City Council. They are part of the local government structure, i.e. legislative authorities to which the City Council delegated some of its competences. Estate Councils undertake resolutions which are like Acts of the City Council. Estate Councillors like City Councillors are elected by popular vote. At the same time Estates and their Councils are democratic bodies providing frames and space for the articulation, aggregation and representation of matters of concern to their communities. Estate Councillors are not paid for their work. They are volunteers who are recruited from the same pool of residents through community networking. From that perspective Estates are like NGOs. The main difference between NGOs and Estate Councils is the funding of their activities. Activities of the Estate Councils are financed from the City budget. Unlike NGOs, Estates are not juristic persons. So far the other main difference between the City Council and an Estate Council is that the competences and activities of Estate Councils are limited to the area of their Estates.

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<http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/osiedla/pages.html?id=15248&ch=15249&p=15930&instance=1017&lang=pl&lhs=osiedla&rhs=publications>, accessed 09.12.2009. The map published on the Internet has been made available only recently.

<sup>367</sup> Poznań City Charter, Appendix to the Poznań City Council’s Act on the Charter of the City of Poznań, dated 18 February 2003, No. X/50/IV/2003. English Version.



Table 6.3 Authors of initiatives to establish accessory units in cities with populations over 100,000.

City	City Council Initiative (from the top)	Citizens' Initiative (from the bottom)
Bielsko-Biała		X
Białystok		X
Bydgoszcz		X
Bytom		X
Chorzów	X	
Częstochowa	X	
Gdańsk		X
Gdynia		X
Jastrzębie Zdrój	X	
Kalisz	X	
Katowice		X
Koszalin		X
Kraków	X	
Lublin		X
Łódź		X
Olsztyn	X	X
Płock	X	
Poznań		X
Rybnik	X	
Rzeczów	X	
Szczecin	X	
Tarnów	X	
Tychy		X
Wałbrzych	X	
Wrocław	X	
Zabrze		X

Source: Porawski and Hałas (eds.) (1996) *Jednostki pomocnicze samorządu terytorialnego w miastach – informator* [Accessory units of local government in municipalities], p.60

Article 41 of the Poznań City Charter lists the tasks of an Estate which essentially are delegated powers. “The task of the Estate shall be to meet the collective demands of the self-governing community. In particular, the Estate’s tasks shall include care for: (1) spatial order; (2) order and security; (3) local roads, pavements and parking lots; (4) local technical infrastructure; (5) property of the City located on the Estate area; (6) condition of the environment and nature; (7) scope of services provided on the Estate area; (8) development of culture, sports and recreation”. This list of tasks does not mean that each year Estate Councils must identify what to do in each of the areas listed. Their function is to take care of local needs and to support local initiatives.

Estate Councils assist the City Council in recognising the needs of local residents and by doing this they are acting as advisory or supporting bodies but their status is much stronger than that of advisory bodies. They take decisions which - upon some conditions (see below) – that are binding on City Hall.

According to Article 48, the Estate Councils are fully financially dependant on the local authority. It is the City Council that decides on the budgets of Estate Councils. The Estate Council decides about the structure of the Estate budget expenditure. For instance they may decide to subsidise tickets to a film show, a theatrical performance, a museum or to organise local community festivities, or buy books for a local library. Sometimes they decide to subsidise a school or children from the poorest families. (City Hall Official 4, Interview 2007)

Larger tasks of the Estate Council include monitoring, analysing and debating the situation in the Estate, taking resolutions on the structure of the Estate budget and advising the City Council on the needs of the Estate community.

Neither the Poznań City Charter nor the statutes implementing the Estates mention the Estate's executive authority. The only executive power is the City Hall. Article 48 of the Poznań City Charter reads that:

1. The Council and the President [i.e. the Mayor] shall supervise the activity of the Estate authorities. [...]
3. The Estate authorities shall submit to the President [i.e. the Mayor] the texts of adopted resolutions within 14 days.

Article 48 makes the Estate Councils accountable to both the City Council and the Mayor, i.e. Estate Councils are part of the government structure (legislative authority). Estate Councils are of course also accountable to the Estate community that elects them. According to Article 37 Estate Councils are advisory bodies and can be dissolved by the mayor (Article 48) if they do not comply with the law. Poznań City Charter, Article 45 reads that the City Hall “shall provide for the administrative, financial, accounting and legal management of Estates”. This is to be interpreted as follows: the City executive authority provides these services to Estate Councils in response to Estate Councils' resolutions. The Mayor also controls the expenditure of Estate Councils, i.e. it is the City Hall which oversees Estate Councils' expenditure.

The Estate's investment budget is based on the so called *pogłowne*, i.e. 'poll' money allocated to each Estate. According to the data obtained from the City Hall, in 2007 the

capitation funding was 9 PLN per resident<sup>368</sup> and in total amounted to 4.5 million PLN in the 2007 budget of the City of Poznań.<sup>369</sup> In the more populous Estates<sup>370</sup>, the poll money can be relatively big i.e. over 100,000 PLN. The Estate Council makes resolutions on its expenditure after having analysed the community's needs and initiatives. The execution of Estate Councils' resolutions, i.e. tasks, by the City Hall has become a major issue. It depends on the efficiency of the City Hall and on the Estate budget and is discussed further in 6.3.1.

Estate Councils were designed to be the first point of reference for members of the local community. Some interviewees (e.g. Tomczak MP, Councillor Chudobiecki and Stosik from SIC! Foundation) emphasised that the City Councillors would not be aware of the needs of Estate communities if there were no Estate Councils.

It is not that the City Council notices all problems of the residents. Also City Hall officials tend to judge the importance of various issues. In my opinion accessory units of local government are 'the place' where civil society can be seen at work. (Tomczak MP, Interview 2007)

From the perspective of the municipal authorities, community problems may appear to be insignificant in contrast to their local perception. It is the depth of understanding of 'local' problems that justifies the role and need for the existence of Estates and their Councils. City Hall Official 4 summarised the role of Estate Councillors as follows:

Firstly, Estate Councillors are, so to say, informed front-desk people. If one wants to contact local authorities, there they are. They know best what is the most important for the Estate community: in which road there is a hole, which part of the Estate is unsafe, who needs help. They live in their Estates. They speak with their neighbours. I think Estate Councillors serve as the go-between between the authorities and residents of Poznań. This should be their role. It is also their role to critically evaluate various projects and drafts of local Acts. (City Hall Official 4, Interview 2007)

It was also noticed that the activities of Estate Councils "are to strengthen bonds among residents; that is to increase social cohesion" (Stosik, SIC! Foundation, Interview 2007).

Estate Councils do not qualify as civil society in terms of the definition offered earlier. They are not self-supporting and they exist as part of the apparatus of local government

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<sup>368</sup> It was increased to 10 PLN in 2010.

<sup>369</sup> In addition each Estate Council is given money for renting its quarters and to cover administrative costs (paper, postage, copying, etc.).

<sup>370</sup> Estates dominated by blocks of flats or old tenement houses like Św. Łazarz Estate.

and are not autonomous. Other definitions, however, point to civil society being supported by the state or attached to it (*cf.* subsection 2.2.1 and e.g. Baccaro 2005, Fisher 1997, Sloat 2005, Vesínová-Kalivodová 2005, Myant 2005). However civil society is not a true outsider to the system of governance particularly when considering the source of their funding. Civil society that gets involved in local projects that contribute to the local quality of life<sup>371</sup>, frequently cooperates with local authorities. It is the Estates' legislative power (extension of the City Council's competences) and the source of their budget which clearly make them part of local government. The effectiveness of Estates as an organised and voluntary form of social life is investigated in subsection 6.3.1 below in the context of project competitions for Estates and community activities.

### **6.3.1. Estates' financial resources and expenditure**

In this part the focus is on the Estate Councils' financial resources and expenditure/investments. Special attention is paid to Estate project competitions organised by the City authorities that aim to support initiatives of the local communities.

As Estates are not juristic persons their financial plans must be approved by the City Hall. Every planned expenditure must be consulted with the relevant department in the City Hall. The department decides whether the Estate's resolution will be executed by the City or whether the Estate Council shall contract the necessary works itself. If it is decided that the Estate Council shall or can contract the works, the department provides information on procedures and identifies possible contractors. The relevant department oversees the procedures and another department inspects and keeps the expenditure record. Investment projects which exceed the value of 14,000 Euro must be executed by the City Hall. In Table 6.4 Estate Councils' expenditure in 2006 is presented.

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<sup>371</sup> Quality of life or societal well-being is a wider concept than living standards. On the issues of measuring societal wellbeing see e.g. Allin (2007).

Table 6.4 Estate Councils' major expenditure areas in 2006

Area	% in the Estate budget
Tasks executed by Estate Councils alone (100%*):	
Sports	31%
Administration	26%
Culture and education	25%
Green areas	8%
Other	9%
Tasks the execution of which was 'delegated' to other municipal units (100%):	
Education (purchases for educational institutions, repairs)	48%
Roads and pavements	18%
Green areas	14%
Social Care	5.5%
Public safety (monitoring)	5%
Youth Cultural Centres (events and classes for children and the youth)	3.5%
Other	6%

Source\_\_\_ (2007) '*Jednostki pomocnicze Miasta (zwane zwyczajowo „osiedlami”, „samorządami pomocniczymi”)*' [Accessory Units of the City of Poznań (commonly called 'estates' and 'accessory self-governments')], City Hall of Poznań, Budget and Analyses Department.

\* 26% was dedicated to administrative costs

Estates invest their capitation money mostly in education and sports. They may increase their investment potential and propose more costly projects if they decide to take part in special Estate project competitions.

Table 6.5 Project successful in the 2006 Estate grant competition (PLN)

Estate name	Project	Total cost 2007	Grant sum	External funds: sponsors and partners	Estate 'poll' money	Execution: City Hall Department or a municipal service provider <sup>372</sup>
Total expenditure		3,236,574	2,500,000	48,600	687,974	
Repairs		80,000	51,000	0	29,000	
Targowe Estate	Playground at. Iłakowiczówny St.	80,000	51,000		29,000	ZZM: green areas
New investments		3,156,574	2,449,000	48,600	658,974	
Świerczewo Estate	Sports field and recreational area refurbishment, between Buczka, Kołataja, Wróblewskiego, Zamoyskiego St.	291,486	187,244		104,242	ZZM: green areas
Wola Estate	Outdoor sports and recreation facilities, Poznań-Wola	266,573	221,993		44,580	Department Supporting City Accessory Units
Rybaki-Piaski Estate	Upgrading of green square at Karmelicka St.	247,241	220,701		26,540	ZZM: green areas
Świt Estate, St. Przybyszewskiego Estate, Ks. J. Popiełuszki Estate	Bike lane and pavement along Bukowska St. between Bułgarska and Przybyszewskiego Sts.	237,524	174,484		63,040	ZDM: pavements and roads
Podolany Estate Strzeszyn Estate Winiary Estate	Bike lanes: technical project preparation for Podolany, Strzeszyn and Winiary Estates	236,244	186,244		50,000	ZDM: pavements and roads
Kosmonautów Estate, Zagroda Estate	Bike lane and pavement along Naramowicka St. between Serbska and Lechicka and along Lechicka St. between Naramowicka and Murawa	237,242	212,442		24,800	ZDM: pavements and roads
Górczyn Estate	Football field, Junior Secondary School No. 50	225,074	173,074	17,000	35,000	Education Department
Wilda Estate	Public multifunction sports field, Secondary School No. 5	224,307	118,707	13,500	92,100	Education Department

<sup>372</sup> Municipal service providers are identified with abbreviations of their Polish names followed with the area of their competences.

Winiary Estate	Multifunction sports field, Junior Secondary School No. 64	206,244	160,044		46,200	Education Department
Szczepankowo-Spławie-Krzesinki Estate	Upgrading of public sports facilities, Primary School No. 61: artificial grass and fences	201,565	177,236	4,100	20,229	Education Department
Górczynek Estate	Preparation of spatial development plan & upgrading of sports and leisure facilities at Leszczyńska-Bojanowska	165,744	154,44		11,000	ZZM: green areas
Krzyżowniki-Smochowice Estate	Multifunction sports field	147,109	121,337		25,772	Department Supporting City Accessory Units
Głuszyna Estate	Sports facilities, Development Phase 3	138,194	100,000		38,194	Department Supporting City Accessory Units
Starówka Estate	Playground reconstruction, Za Groblą St.	135,000	105,000		30,000	ZZM: green areas
Przyjaźń Estate	Playground in W. Czarnieckiego Park	95,500	61,500	4,000	30,000	ZZM: green areas
Pod Lipami Estate	Four-lane running course, Schools with extensive sports programme (No. 1)	57,000	41,000	10,000	6,000	Education Department
Komandoria - Pomet Estate	Playground upgrading	26,527	18,250		8,277	Department Supporting City Accessory Units
Morasko Estate	Upgrading of the Estate Council's seat at Morasko St.: central heating, additional doors	18,000	15,000		3,000	POZSERWIS: construction works

Source: City Hall of Poznań<sup>373</sup>

Estate project competitions are separate from NGO grant competitions. The objectives of Estate project competitions (and NGO grant competitions) are identified in the local government strategy and *The City of Poznań Development Plan for 2005-2010: Priorities and Programmes*<sup>374</sup>. (Henceforth I will refer to Estate project competitions as Estate grant

<sup>373</sup> \_\_\_\_, 'Środki przyznane jednostkom pomocniczym – osiedlom na realizację zadań zgłoszonych w ramach konkursu w latach 2000-2007' [Financial resources granted to the Accessory Units – Estates for the purpose of the realisation of the tasks notified in the process of competition between 2000-2007], City Hall of Poznań.

<sup>374</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2004) 'Plan Rozwoju Miasta Poznania na lata 2005-2010. Priorytety i Programy' [The City of Poznań Development Plan for 2005-2010. Priorities and Programmes], November, Poznań City Council's Act No. LVI/592/IV/2004, dated 23.11.2004, *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Miasta Poznania* [Public Bulletin of the City of Poznań],

competitions.) Estate grants help Estates carry out investments which are too costly to be covered by their capitation money. Estate grant competitions were introduced in Poznań in 2000. In 2006 the City Council dedicated to them 2.5 million PLN. Every project proposed by an Estate Council, needs to be covered in 10% with the Estate capitation founding. This means that while designing the budget expenditure, an Estate Council must develop a clear hierarchy of local community needs. Projects must include future running and maintenance costs and the total cost of a project should not exceed 250,000 PLN.

According to the materials received from the Competition Commission in the City Hall of Poznań<sup>375</sup>, Estate projects in 2006 could be in the areas of culture, sports, leisure, order and safety, environmental protection and the information society. Table 6.5 (above) lists projects awarded grants in the 2006 competition and executed in 2007. Joint projects of 2 or more Estates are in bold.

The grant money together with the dedicated capitation founding and sponsors' contributions are passed to the City Hall department responsible for a given project execution which, if necessary, involves a competent municipal service provider.

The system of awarding points was determined in 2006 by criteria designed to make the competition more transparent (Kołodziejczak, Secretary of the City Council, Interview 2007). Projects are graded on a scale. Estate Councils win more points for projects which they plan to carry jointly with neighbouring Estates. A single Estate project gets 5 points, a joint project of two Estates gets 10 points, and a joint project of 3 Estates gets 15 points. Close cooperation between Estates pays where joint projects are considered more likely to upgrade larger areas and hence improve the living standards of more Posnanians. In part they are awarded more points also because 2 or 3 Estates dedicate more money from their capitation funding to the project. Cooperation facilitates larger scale projects. Also Estates which are able to cover more than 10% of the project cost get 1 point more for every 1% covered above the minimum. Another important criterion is the legal status of the lot/property identified in the investment project. If the lot/property is municipal the project gets additional 10 points. If it is a municipal property leased for 99 years to another entity,

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[http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/documents.html?co=print&id=93&parent=72&instance=1001&lang=pl&lhs=bip\\_home&rhs=null](http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/documents.html?co=print&id=93&parent=72&instance=1001&lang=pl&lhs=bip_home&rhs=null), accessed 09.12.2009.

<sup>375</sup> \_\_\_\_, 'Kryteria oceny wniosków w roku 2006' [Criteria for the evaluation of Estates' grants applications in 2006], City Hall of Poznań.



the project gets an additional 3 points<sup>376</sup>. In total the number of points awarded cannot exceed 30 points. Estate Council projects may attract external funding, in money or in kind, from sponsors or partners. Every 1% of the project cost covered with external funds increases the project's chances of winning a municipal grant. There are also additional criteria used in Estate grant competitions where two or more projects are awarded the same number of points. One additional criterion is 'the debutante Estate', i.e. the Estate taking part in the competition for the first time or the Estate that has not yet won a grant. Another criterion is the accessibility of already existing facilities. If a given service is available somewhere else, what matters is the distance between the Estate and the place where the service is available. The longer the distance, the more likely it is that the project will win a grant. The last additional criterion is the cost of the project execution. Less costly projects are chosen. However, this applies only to the situation where two or more projects are awarded the same number of points. These regulations suggest that Poznań's local authorities are keen to support citizens' initiative, as was implicit for one councillor:

Grants are awarded in support of local initiatives. Projects are manifestations of civil society's potential and involvement. (Kołodziejczak, Secretary of the City Council, Interview 2007)

In 2006, 31 projects were submitted and 19 were awarded grants amounting to 2.5 million PLN in total. All winning projects were investments in infrastructure: 77% of projects were investments in sporting facilities, bike lanes included, and 23% in green areas. In 2006 for the first time among the winning projects were projects prepared jointly by 3 Estates: one by Świt Estate, St. Przybyszewskiego Estate and Ks. J. Popiełuszki Estate, and one by Podolany Estate, Strzeszyn Estate and Winiary Estate<sup>377</sup>. Of 19 successful projects 5 were co-funded by external sponsors/partners to the sum of 48,600 PLN. In general, civil society organisations, Estates included, have great difficulties obtaining external funding. The European Union is an important potential partner that may co-finance some projects of the Estates. As "EU grants may increase the amount of money which Estate Councils dedicate to projects submitted to our Estate grant competitions." (Kołodziejczak, Secretary of the City Council, Interview 2007), Poznań's local authorities try to encourage Estates to make joint EU grant applications.

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<sup>376</sup> Projects that aim at using lots or properties that are not municipal properties get no additional points. The legal status of lots/properties matters as those that are not municipal or are municipal but leased to other entities increase the project cost.

<sup>377</sup> In the same competition Winiary Estate won one more grant for which it applied alone.

Apart from applying for EU grants, Estates can also increase their investment potential through cooperation with NGOs. If a need of the Estate community can be satisfied by NGOs, they should cooperate if only for practical reasons. However, “So far the cooperation of Estate Councils with NGOs is next to none.” (Woškowiak, City and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor, Interview 2007). In fact, this may over-state the point. (*cf.* subsection 6.5.1 on the Association of Ławica Estate Friends). The City offers opportunities for the development of local initiatives but community involvement is essential:

An Estate Council can apply for grants to re-cultivate a green area, to put new benches or lamps there. It can apply to, for example, enlarge a school sporting field and build a sports centre which will serve all local residents, or to furnish a children’s playground. [...] The incentive of the city authorities is: mobilise yourselves, organise elections to Estate Councils and you will have a chance to take part in all those undertakings. (Senator Alexandrowicz, Interview 2007)

In spite of the efforts of local authorities in stimulating local initiatives not all Estates submit projects. Tomczak MP singled out the reason for this situation saying that “Much depends on local society leaders.” (Interview 2007). Creating an opportunity is one thing, but making use of it requires involvement. Leadership and involvement are essential to civil society and involve issues returned to later in this chapter.

In 2007, the City Council dedicated 2.5 million PLN to the best Estate project competitions and 40 million PLN to NGO grant competitions. Estates can submit projects provided that they will finance the projects in at least 10% from their capitation funding. NGOs can apply for grants provided that they will provide at least 30% of the project’s finance. Thus in terms of Estates and NGOs’ financial participation in projects, Estates are treated favourably. The main reasons are that the Estate is active in more areas than a single NGO and that Estates undertake investments in technical infrastructure which NGOs do not do.

Undoubtedly Estate project competitions encourage civil society activities in Poznań. By participating in the Estate project competitions, Estate Councils may take active part in the redistribution of the local government’s budget. Procedures are clearly laid down and since Estates do not submit projects of national or international relevance, the issue of one Estate being favoured over another hardly arises. It may happen that a project relevant to the image of the city as a whole is slightly favoured, but this cannot be ‘proved’. No criticism of Estate project competitions was expressed by the interviewees. The 2007 Estate project competitions increased Estates’ investment potential by over 50% if compared with all

Estates' budgets based on the capitation funding. The situation has not changed. It follows that the City authorities do support Poznań Estates.

#### **6.4. The Estate Councils' working environment**

Community-based Estates are a form of self-government and have been designed to be part of the local government structure operating at the local level. This section looks at their operation and working environment. Their work includes administrative cooperation with the City Hall and work with the Estate community. In this section various patterns of Estate Councillors' and community's involvement are discussed. First I focus on the work of the Estate Councils. A particular point is their age composition and whether this has an impact on their operation. Following this is a discussion of the effectiveness and visibility of the Estate Councils in their dealings with residents. Participation in community activities is of course a key indicator of civil society.

Estate Councillors are elected representatives of Estate communities. They are not remunerated for their work. A number of city councillors are also Estate Councillors. As volunteers the decision to become an Estate Councillor is frequently spontaneous and the trouble, according to Stuligrosz MP, is that:

[...] the people who become Estate Councillors do not always have enough energy and they lack some skills necessary for leaders of civil society." (Stuligrosz MP, Interview 2007)

The City Hall provides training courses on administrative matters but not on leadership. In addition the work of Estate Councillors can be tedious and requires much time. It happens that Estate Councillors overlook the fact that their social function involves continuous effort. The Estate Councils in Św. Łazarz and Ławica consist of 21 and 15 councillors respectively. They have their small executive Boards (see chapters 1 and 5). The Boards of Estate Councils in Poznań are in fact not executive, but 'managing' Boards. However since in the Local *Gmina* Self-Government Act of 1990 the Boards of accessory sub-local government units are called "executive", I decided to use this adjective. (Their actual power is debated below and in section 6.6.) Members of the Board of the Estate Council are usually the most active councillors. They do most of the work. Pucher, Deputy Chairman of Św. Łazarz Estate (the population of which is over 31,000) described the situation as follows:

It is not that the work of Estate Councillors is limited to coming to the Estate Council sittings once a month and complaining about the ineffectiveness of the Estate Council's Board. The Board has 3 members and they are volunteers. The time they can devote to community work is limited. Some councillors do not understand the situation. This is probably the main problem of our local democracy. (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of the Św. Łazarz Estate Council Board, Interview 2007)

However, the situation is more complicated:

Various developments in an Estate are directly relevant to its community but the work of Estate Councils is difficult because Estate Councils have little money, bear little responsibility and in a way only assist the City Council. All those things combine and some Estate Councils have found their way and they function in a great way whereas Councillors in other Estate Councils give up after one term. (City Councillor Ganowicz, Interview 2007)

In this difficult situation:

After 2 years, 50% of Estate Councillors quit. So sometime after elections there is no quorum at Estate Council meetings. Some councillors resign because they don't have enough time and this work is strictly voluntary. Some are disappointed because they hoped they would be able to do more and they cannot. (City and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Woškowiak, Interview 2007)

Estate Councillors deal with various departments in the City Hall and although Estate Councils are legislative bodies, Estate Councillors - unlike City Councillors - to some extent do the work of City Hall officials. They have to take care of the technical preparation of Estate projects and sometimes they oversee the execution of commissioned construction works directly. Estate Councils set their surgery hours at which they are available in person for the community members. The councillors who are available then are usually members of the Estate Council Board. They are available twice a week (Św. Łazarz Estate) or once a week (Ławica Estate) for 2 hours of surgery. They are also ready to meet Estate community members at other times on request. At the same time Estate Councillors should seek active contact with their communities to be well informed about the community's needs.

[...] councillors of Estate Councils do not limit their contacts to the other 14 or 15 Estate Councillors but they are in touch with their neighbours. This is particularly commonplace in peripheral Estates like Starołęka Estate with single family houses. Their Estate Councillors' contacts with the local community are more advanced than in densely populated Estates with blocks of flats (City Councillor and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski, Interview 2007)

Leadership is needed to increase the involvement of local residents and a deeper involvement of all members of Estate Councils is needed to divide the workload.

Reflecting on the level of involvement of local residents with Estate Councils, Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Pucher pointed to the Estate Councils' age composition.

Polish civil society consists mainly of people who have free time, mostly pensioners. [...] Unfortunately in Poland the picture of local democracy is the image of a crazy volunteer who has retired and thus has lots of free time. This volunteer looks for things to do, for his or her place in life. This is not always bad but there are many 'noisy' and redundant features that go with it. (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of the Św. Łazarz Estate Council Board, Interview 2007)

Older Estate Councillors were brought up in the communist system and frequently hold 'old' attitudes to authorities which amount to them being highly sceptical about any possible success in cooperation with the City Hall. As a result they are passive: they would complain about the Estate Council's performance but not act. The low involvement of younger community members may be attributed to the shallowness of civil society participation, but another factor is that due to low personal incomes they frequently take more than one job, crowding out the possibility of voluntary work. This does not mean that young people do not stand for election: people in their twenties are running in Estate elections and are successful. They are mostly young graduates.

Sociologist Bondyra identified another possible problem in the Councils' composition:

Estate Councils are jeopardised by a threat of being monopolised by few new 'oligarchs' who will have the say on what to fund or subsidise and will separate themselves from the community. (Dr Bondyra, AMU, Department of Sociology, Local Government Research Group, Interview 2007)

If local residents are not interested in the operations of accessory units, the threat can be real. However, since the hard work of Estate Councillors' gives no material profits, only personal satisfaction, this threat is unlikely.

Estates can choose the form of their government (see chapters 1 and 5). The Estate can be governed by its Council or by the residents' General Assembly in which all residents eligible to cast votes take resolutions. This leads to a greater involvement of the residents as all are members of the Estate government. The General Assembly has been the option chosen by some small Estates. Citing the example of Wilczy Młyn Estate one councillor said:

Residents of Wilczy Młyn opted for the General Assembly since the Estate was small. The assembly elects the Board that represents the community. Wilczy Młyn Estate has been one of the Estates where all elements of infrastructure have been

ready fastest thanks to the high involvement of local residents. The results of Estates' activities and residents' involvement in the Estate self-governance can be best seen in Estates with small populations. If there is something the Estate community needs, for example they need roads, sewage, gas, power or water systems, they will fight for it. (City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

City Councillor and Warszawskie Estate Councillor Grześ referred to the functioning of Estate Councils as a chance for citizens to be active and manifest their involvement in local issues:

However, this opportunity is not always used. [...] In some areas that formerly belonged to housing cooperatives there are now several Estate Councils and local residents are confused. There, Estate Councils are less visible. (City Councillor and Warszawskie Estate Councillor Grześ, Interview 2007)

Housing cooperatives still exist. Some have the word *osiedle* [Estate] in their names. Companies which invest in new housing developments frequently refer to their developments as *osiedle* too. Thus much depends also on with which institution residents identify themselves. This identification is highly relevant to residents' involvement in what they consider to be local affairs.

Questionnaire respondents from both Estates have lived for a long time in their Estates (Table 6.6). 45.6% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate have been residents there for over 20 years and 56.5% respondents from Ławica Estate have lived in their Estate for 16-20 years.

Table 6.6 For how long have you been living the Estate?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Less than a year	4.4	1.6
1 year to 5 years	13.2	3.2
6 years to 10 years	8.8	4.8
11 years to 15 years	8.8	21.0
16 years to 20 years	19.1	56.5
More than 20 years	45.6	12.9
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

However, when asked to give the name of their respective Estate, many respondents had difficulties<sup>378</sup>. 61.8% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate and 74.2% from Ławica

<sup>378</sup> The names of Estate Councils consist of the word *rada* [council] and the name of the Estate.

Estate answered ‘yes’, i.e. they knew the name of their Estate<sup>379</sup>. Thus, in spite of living in the Estates for a long time, not all Estate residents are aware that they are members of a defined community. While it is not unusual for responses to such questions revealing similarly low levels of knowledge, the results do suggest that for many residents the Estate Councils have a low visibility. If Estates are viewed as part of local self-government and not as a manifestation of civil society, then an increase of local residents’ identification with Estates can be co-dependant with the effectiveness of the Estate authority.

Estate Councils struggle with City authorities to improve the wellbeing of their communities. The timing of the execution of the Estate’s resolutions by the City Hall is one of the reasons why Estates may be perceived as ineffective. Initiatives that do not need financial investment are implemented “relatively smoothly” (City and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007). The implementation of costly projects can be delayed as at the time projects are submitted, they may not fit into the City’s investment plans. This can be the case with upgrading technical infrastructure for example upgrading a sewage collection system.

The City answers: here is our budget, these are our investment/expenditure plans, [and] the sewage collection system serving your area will be built in 20 years from now. Residents protest strongly and I am not surprised by their reaction. [...] the execution of initiatives which require financial means is in the hands of the Mayor and in the hands of the City Councillors who decide about the structure of the City’s budget expenditure. To successfully pursue an initiative which requires financial investment much paper work and lobbying are needed. (City Councillor and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007)

The delayed execution of investment projects may discourage residents from being involved whereas Estate Councillors who voluntarily devote their free time to the community “feel uncomfortable if they are not effective” (Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007).

Of paramount importance is the fact that Estates are not juristic persons which means that their budgets and expenditures are part of the City budget. This can lead to problems as in Smochowice-Krzyżowniki Estate:

In Smochowice Estate [Smochowice-Krzyżowniki Estate], the community and the council are very active and many very interesting things happen there. Recently

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<sup>379</sup> If a respondent marked ‘yes’ but then gave a wrong Estate name or did not write its name, the first answer was reinterpreted as a ‘no’ answer.

tennis courts have been developed with some grant money. The problem is that the Estate Council cannot lease the courts nor charge fees for using them and the courts need regular maintenance and supervision. As the Estate Council is part of local self-government, the fees must be fixed by the City Council and will go to the City budget. And now the fees for using the tennis courts are a problem debated by the City Council. (City Councillor Ganowicz, Interview 2007)

The developed tennis courts are the property of the City but the Estate Council - which is responsible for maintaining them - cannot take any decisions related to the lease of a public property nor on fees for tennis players who use it. The potential income generated by the tennis courts will not increase the Estate budget. At present it is not easy to find a reasonable solution.

The 'visibility' of Estate Councils was identified as another issue by City and Warszawskie Estate Councillor Grześ (Interview 2007). This issue is relevant as the effectiveness of Estate Councils tends to be judged on the Councils' achievements which in turn may affect the involvement of residents. As one councillor put it:

Initiatives that do not require financial investments frequently blossom. For instance there are regular activities for senior citizens and for the youth for which only a place has to be provided. [...] but successful initiatives like these passed unnoticed, i.e. uninvolved residents do not notice them and such activities get no media coverage. (City Councillor and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007)

Since Estate Councils are to monitor the needs of the community, it needs to be recognised that within the Estate community there are many groups of residents that need attention. Meeting the needs of children or the elderly may not be recognised by residents who do not have children nor live with the elderly. Thus the recognition of achievements depends on whether they positively affect a particular member of the community.

Some residents may not approve of an initiative of the Estate Council because they may not see the needs of the Estate as a whole. The case of the recently built Plaza Shopping Centre in Winiary Estate, an area dominated by tall blocks of flats, provides such an example. The City sold the lot on which the shopping centre could be built to developers which met with the disapproval of some residents who wanted the lot to be a green park.

They did not want the Plaza to be built at all. They wished there had been a nice park. Somebody rightly observed that it would be the most expensive green lot in the world. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

After successful negotiations carried out by Estate Councillors, the developers:



promised 500,000 PLN as a kind of compensation for changing our life in the Estate. [...] We transferred the money to the City and the City paid with its money for the rain water collection system. With that money streets in the Estate have also been paved. The City would surely not have paved them at the time without that money. My point is that with a civil society approach much more things can be done. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

Living conditions in the Estate have significantly improved. However the busy shopping centre has increased traffic in the area and the Estate Council has sought to negotiate with the City how to improve safety and reduce the noise.

The visibility of Estates is a complex issue. It appears that Estate residents tend to identify the Estate with the neighbourhood. Although nearly 40% of respondents in Św. Łazarz Estate and over 25% of respondents in Ławica Estates did not know the name of their respective Estates, the respondents felt strongly bonded with their Estates. The average grade was 3.41 in Św. Łazarz Estate and 3.85 in Ławica Estate. In Św. Łazarz there has been a conscious effort by local people to raise awareness of the history of the area<sup>380</sup>. Ławica Estate is a different case. In 1940 when the area was incorporated, it was a small village. In the 1970s a building cooperative started transforming parts of the area into a new housing estate (see chapter 1). Public spaces important for the creation of quality social contacts were on the plans but never developed (see chapter 4, subsection 4.4.1; on the issue of 'sense of community' see Talen 1999). The residents used to help each other while building their houses in the difficult communist times when it was hard to get materials and labour without personal connections. They were involved in the construction of roads and technical infrastructure in the Estate.

My results do not differ much from the data published in 'The quality of life in Poznań' (2007) publication based on research carried out by the Quality of Life Research Centre (Adam Mickiewicz University)<sup>381</sup>. There the sense of attachment to Poznań has been examined as reflected in residents' declared bond with their Estate (or former city district), street and the city itself. In 2006 an increase in the attachment to the city was observed (see

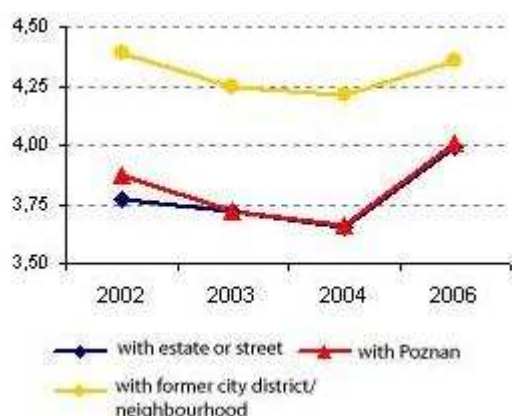
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<sup>380</sup> See chapter 4, subsection 4.3.1 and chapter 1, section 1.3.

<sup>381</sup> In 2000, Poznań City Hall with the Department of Sociology of Adam Mickiewicz University started a project aimed at monitoring life quality indicators within the city (Cichocki 2005). The Life Quality Research Centre emerged from this cooperation. The resulting publication titled \_\_\_\_ (2007) '*Jakość życia w Poznaniu*' [The quality of life in Poznań] Life Quality Research Centre, City Hall of Poznań, was published with the city promotional slogan "*Poznań. Tu warto żyć*" [Poznań. It is good to live here]. For update see: *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/s8a/pages.html?id=843&ch=844&p=2242&instance=1017&lang=pl&lhs=cbjz&rhs=publications>, accessed 28.05.2009.

Figure 6.1) compared to 2004. 9 out of 10 inhabitants of Poznań felt bonded with the city (average score 3.99 on the 5 to 1 scale where: over 3.75 means very strong and under 2.25 very weak). More than 75% of Poznań residents felt bonded with their 'district' (average 4.01) and Estate or street (average 3.99).

Figure 6.1 Sense of attachment to Poznań



Source: Life Quality Research Centre<sup>382</sup>

The situation in 2004 is interesting and should be interpreted as a positive outcome of the reforms initiated in 1990. In short the socio-political and economic situation in Poland started to stabilise in 2003-2004. The long process of reducing inflation from 70.3% in 1991 (35.3% in 1993, 19.9% in 1996, 10.15 in 2000) to 0.85 in 2003 was finally completed (Kwaśnicki 2004). The unemployment rate, which was highest in 2002 (20%)<sup>383</sup>, started falling in 2003. In Poznań it was 7.1% in 2003 (2.9% in 2007). In 2003 Poznań became a municipal (urban) powiat. In 2004 Poland became member state of the EU. The main benefit of joining the EU according to Poles was also that the situation in Poland 'stabilised' (Cichocki and Jabkowski 2009: 209).

<sup>382</sup> *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], 'Badania jakości życia w Poznaniu, Poczucie związku Poznaniem' [Research on life quality in Poznań. Sense of attachment to Poznań], Life Quality Research Centre, City Hall of Poznań.  
[http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/cbjz/aspects.html?co=print&as\\_id=180&as\\_dz\\_id=10](http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/cbjz/aspects.html?co=print&as_id=180&as_dz_id=10), accessed 28.05.2009.

<sup>383</sup> Compare: Szczapa, J. 'Bezrobocie w Polsce w latach 1990 – 2007 Wprowadzenie' [Unemployment in Poland between 1990-2007 Introduction], *Katedra Ekonomii Społeczna Wyższa Szkoła Przedsiębiorczości i Zarządzania w Łodzi*  
[http://www.ae.katowice.pl/images/user/File/katedra\\_ekonomii/J.Szczapa\\_Bezrobocie\\_w\\_Polsce\\_w\\_latach\\_1990\\_-\\_2007.pdf](http://www.ae.katowice.pl/images/user/File/katedra_ekonomii/J.Szczapa_Bezrobocie_w_Polsce_w_latach_1990_-_2007.pdf), accessed 20.08.2010.

In 2006 the average integrated indicator value<sup>384</sup> was 4.04 and in 2008 it was 4.41. Interestingly in 2008 Posnanians declared stronger attachment to their Estates than to former 'districts'<sup>385</sup>.

Residents of Poznań like their city and Estates but their interest in local affairs may not be high. Estate residents aim to improve their own wellbeing and at this very local level they judge what is important for them from their own perspective. Their involvement tends to increase with their experience of political involvement with successful undertakings which are directly relevant to them. Examples of chains of successful initiatives were numerous for example:

[In Junikowo Estate] we have managed to achieve a lot and we have a young civil society. It all started with poor technical infrastructure in the Estate. First, in the 1980s, we invested in being connected to the gas supply system, then to the water supply system. Then the new era began. We started to build roads, got connected to phone lines. Thus we have been working together to improve our living standards. It worked great when we worked on the phone lines. Estate activists managed to execute a project thanks to which 2,500 residents were connected to telephone lines. The community has been integrating more strongly with every investment project. Today we are quite well integrated. I know majority of Estate residents at least by sight and many are my friends. (City Councillor Kręglewski, Interview 2007)

A project execution is arduous for local activists and it takes much of their time but it makes residents act together. Later they work together on other projects. It does happen that 5-6 years after the completion of one project the people who worked on it, start working together on another one. (City Councillor Przybylak, Interview 2007)

Quality leadership gives good results. Many Estate Councillors have a mission to improve the living standards of local residents. City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki (Interview 2007) said: "We work to make a change."

Passivity can have many reasons. An active community may become passive once its needs are satisfied. The example of such a situation was given by City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki:

There are Estates where much was going on. Wilczy Młyn Estate is but one example. Now all utilities are there and roads are paved. Once residents' needs were satisfied, their interest in the Estate Council activities has decreased and they see no point in coming to meetings. (City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

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<sup>384</sup> Comparative data from Life Quality Research Centre (*op. cit.*).

<sup>385</sup> Data from Life Quality Research Centre (*ibid.*).

The example given by City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki quoted above supports Hirschman's argument (introduced in the literature review that societies oscillate between periods of more intense preoccupation with public issues and periods of almost total concentration on individual improvement and private welfare goods (Hirschman [1982], 2002, Gremion 1999). Many interviewees brought up the objectives of residents in different contexts. A shared objective or need must be identified for people to act together. A need is identified as common if a single citizen cannot satisfy it alone and other citizens decide they have the same need or objective. This drives them to act together. Pacia, Director of Civic Matters and Passports Department in the Wielkopolskie Voivodship Office, commented on the above as follows:

The voice of a citizen is heard if it is not single that is if more citizens act in unison. Joint actions can be effective. A citizen can always inform others about his or her concerns or needs they recognise. However, if he or she raises an issue, it must be important. If it is not, it does not win the support of other citizens. (Pacia, Interview 2007)

Estate Councillors claimed that participation in public affairs increases only if residents have a problem that needs to be solved. City Hall Official 2 said that what has changed dramatically since 1989 is that nowadays citizens are more informed and more aware of their rights. They know that if they work together, there can be positive dividends.

I investigated residents' readiness to participate in public affairs. Residents of the two Estates rarely participate in meetings organised by the Estate Councils.

Table 6.7 Do you take part in the Estate meetings?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes, always	1.5	0.0
Yes, often	5.9	8.1
No, I prefer not to take part	22.1	38.7
I have never taken part in such meetings	70.6	53.2
Total	100.0	100.0

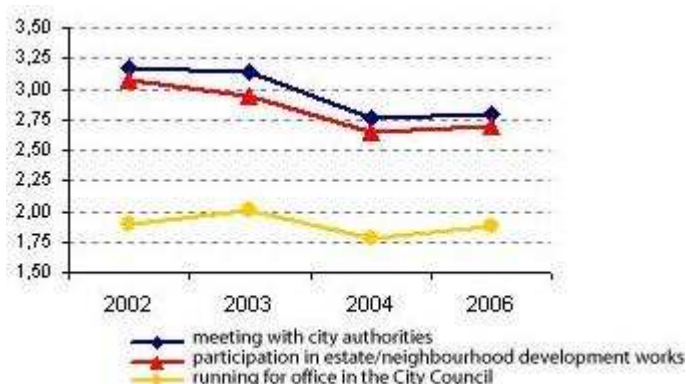
Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

In Św. Łazarz Estate 70.6% of respondents and 53.2% in Ławica Estate had never taken part in Estate meetings. These results are similar to the data published in 'The quality of life in Poznań' report (2007), subsection 'Civic Poznań' [*Obywatelski Poznań*]. Residents' readiness to participate in City affairs (see Figure 6.2) reflected in respondents' answers to

questions about their willingness to participate in meetings with city authorities, to take part in local activities and to run in City Council elections is low<sup>386</sup>.

Figure 6.2 Readiness to participate in City affairs



Source: Life Quality Research Centre<sup>387</sup>

The relative unwillingness to take part in City and Estate affairs may be related to an increasing satisfaction with living standards – contact tends to happen in the event of problems. It might also be a sign of the general unwillingness to devote time to public activities. In 2008 the two indicators were slightly higher (3.13 and 2.93 respectively)<sup>388</sup>.

As participation in community activities is treated as an indicator of civil society residents' were asked about their willingness to be involved (Tables 6.8 and 6.9). In the case of Ławica Estate 80.6% of respondents thought that local residents would willingly take part in local activities and the same percentage of respondents declared that they would engage in such activities themselves. In the case of Św. Łazarz Estate every second respondent was of the opinion that residents willingly take part in local activities and 64.7% would engage in local initiatives themselves. These percentages contrast drastically with the percentage of questionnaire respondents who have never been to any Estate meeting (Table 6.7), a difference which may be attributed to the over-representation of respondents aged 18-24 (Św. Łazarz Estate) and under-representation of respondents aged 35-44 (Ławica Estate) in my samples (*cf.* chapter 4, section 4.5).

<sup>386</sup> According to the data from Life Quality Research Centre, in 2006 every third resident of Poznań declared their readiness to participate in meetings with the City authorities dedicated to important issues (average grade 2.79 on the scale from 5 to 1 where: over 3.75 means very strong and under 2.25 very weak) and also willingness to take part in working groups preparing a development plan for their Estate or street (average 2.70). Every twelfth inhabitant of Poznań declared readiness to run in the City Council elections (average 1.87). General evaluation of the readiness to get involved in the city affairs was at the level of 2.46.

<sup>387</sup> Data from Life Quality Research Centre (*op. cit.*).

<sup>388</sup> Data from Life Quality Research Centre (*ibid.*).

Table 6.8 In your opinion, would the residents of the Estate willingly engage in joint activities, initiatives?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	51.5	80.6
No	48.5	19.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

Table 6.9 Would you engage in joint activities, initiatives?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	64.7	80.6
No	35.3	19.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

The responses to the question ‘Would you engage in joint activities, initiatives?’ (Table 6.9) were different from the answers to my questions about the respondent’s engagement in community activities in the last few years. To help respondents identify their possible areas of involvement they were asked to give examples of their involvement. (Tables 6.10 and 6.11). Residents of Ławica Estate declared a much higher involvement in activity for both the benefit of the City and their Estate than those from Św. Łazarz Estate. Every third respondent from Ławica Estate declared they participated in some kind of activities for the City (30.6%) and Estate (33.9%). In Św. Łazarz Estate the comparable figures were only 5.9% and 8.8% respectively.

Table 6.10 In the last few years did you try to become involved in some kind of activity which aimed to benefit the City?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	5.9	30.6
No	94.1	69.4
Total	100.0	100.0
Examples: struggle with City authorities to win a lot for the Estate sports field, membership in a light cavalry re-enactment group and participation in various Poznań events, involvement in keeping Poznań clean, acting as an alderman, public protests, protesting against a road construction project, protesting against a wrongly designed road, helping build a church, participation in a debate with the City Deputy-Mayor on a local spatial development plan, helping the poor, collection of food, provision of access to the Internet in the Old Market, protection of trees in the Liberty Square in the City centre, fostering international cooperation with HEIs abroad, making benches for the community, running in local elections with one's own programme for City improvement, furnishing a green square, organising local festivities		

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

Table 6.11 In the last few years did you try to become involved in some kind of activity which aimed to benefit the Estate community?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	8.8	33.9
No	91.2	66.1
Total	100.0	100.0
Examples: garbage recycling, struggle against drunkards and beggars, fencing green area around a tenement house, taking part in Let's Clean the World action, administrative struggle to win back lots illegally incorporated by local residents, writing flyers which encouraged residents to take part in local activities, road construction, extension of a bus line, writing opinions on a new spatial development plan, building a recreation centre, improvement of road safety, serving as an Estate Councillor, protests against noise from neighbouring motor racing circuit, voluntarily teaching dance courses, cleaning the Estate, petitioning for a space for the Estate youth centre, contributing to the parish newsletter, construction of an outdoor basketball field, bought information boards, donated benches, construction of a skating lot and a sports field, action "Let's discover the Marceliński forest".		

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

Residents of Ławica Estate (Tables 6.8, 6.9. and 6.10, 6.11) are more interested in local activities and much more willing to be involved than residents of Św. Łazarz Estate. Over 80% of Ławica Estate respondents declared their potential involvement in Estate activities and over 30% were involved. In Św. Łazarz Estate many more (64.7%) "would get involved" but much less (8.8%) were actually involved. The examples given demonstrate that some activities for the Estate's community benefit were identical with activities for the City's community benefit. They also demonstrate that what has driven residents to become involved was relevant both to their community and to themselves.

Household incomes of those living in Ławica Estate are significantly higher than those living in Św. Łazarz Estate (*cf.* chapter 5, subsection 5.3.4, Table 5.1) and much higher than the average personal income in Poland<sup>389</sup>. High personal incomes enables residents to satisfy many of their needs more effectively. More affluent members of society may also have more free time as they do not struggle to make ends meet. Consequently, they may be more willing to be involved in voluntary work.

Residents were also asked if they think that other residents are interested in what is happening in the Estate (Table 6.12). 42.6% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate and 64.5% from Ławica Estate thought that Estate residents were interested. The results may indicate that interesting things are happening in the Estates. They may also indicate residents' search for information about what is actually happening in their Estates.

Table 6.12 Do you think that most residents are interested in what is happening in the Estate?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	42.6	64.5
No	57.4	35.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

In terms of percentages, the responses given by residents of Ławica Estate are roughly the opposite of those to the question about their past involvement in activities for the Estate community's benefit (Table 6.11). It follows that in their opinion the percentage of residents interested in what is happening in the Estate is 30% higher than the percentage of respondents who were involved in some activities. In Św. Łazarz Estate the situation is different. According to the respondents less than 50% of residents are interested in what is happening in their Estate. This roughly compares with the percentage of Estate residents who, according to the respondents, would not willingly engage in joint activities (Table 6.8).

Answers to the question: *What discourages/stops you most from taking part in local community activities?* pointed to two groups of reasons. The first group can be described as personal obstacles, i.e. lack of time and poor health or advanced age. The second group of

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<sup>389</sup> In 2008 the average personal income in Poland was 2.5 higher than in 1997, i.e. 413 PLN in April 1997 and 1024 PLN in April 2008, \_\_\_\_ (2008) '*Polacy o swojej sytuacji materialnej*' [Poles evaluation of their material wellbeing/financial standing], *Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS)*, Warszawa, June, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K\\_094\\_08.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K_094_08.PDF), accessed 28.05.2009.



reasons can be described as general disappointment e.g. reluctance and thinking that taking part in community activities is a waste of time, lack of Estate Council's initiatives, lack of solidarity, lack of time, low effectiveness of action taken, unreasonable actions taken in the past and actions being thwarted due to the Estate Council's limited funds. Some respondents used the phrase *czyn społeczny* [unpaid community action] referring to the communist system in which participation in such organised actions was actually a must. They disliked the idea of community actions due to their past experience. Low involvement can be also a social repercussion of the economic transition and its outcomes (cf. for example Ziółkowski 2005, Nowak and Nowosielski 2005). In 2008 the number of volunteers started growing<sup>390</sup>. Hirschman's ([1982], 2002) shifting involvement could be an explanation too (see subsection 2.2.2).

The environment in which Estate Councils work keeps changing. The age composition of Estate Councils is changing with younger citizens elected as councillors. Younger councillors bring in their own experience of democracy. The issue of leadership is a difficult one. It is difficult because the most enthusiastic and skilled volunteers may burn out if their workload is excessive. There are many reasons why some Estates are active and are some not. The most important reason is the community's desire to improve its living conditions in the Estate.

In general, people act only when something threatens their wellbeing. This is so in the street where I live. People living in my street got together as soon as I informed them that our street was going to be dug up because the City decided that a new part of the rain water collection system was to be connected to pipes under our street. And it was us who had actually paid for the construction of our street and the technical infrastructure from our own pockets. In 24 hours a protest was written, signed and sent because the issue was of immediate relevance to my neighbours. (Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, Interview 2007)

It is only now that basic needs of communities have been satisfied though not all of them yet. If a once active civil society in an Estate appears dormant, it does not mean it cannot be activated. Its needs have changed. Another issue is the perception of the work of Estate Councillors. It is not that an Estate Council's initiatives please everybody. Many residents hardly pay any attention to activities which are not of direct relevance to them. Whether an Estate Council is visible largely depends on the kind of needs it successfully meets. Journalist Przybylska (Interview 2007) emphasised that "Most initiatives are born out of

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<sup>390</sup> Data from Life Quality Research Centre (*op. cit.*).

deep dissatisfaction.”. Paradoxically successes of Estate Councils may lead to councillors’ passivity and to lowering the community’s involvement in local affairs. In such a situation people with new ideas are needed to activate civil society.

In this section I focused on the environment in which Estate Councils work. The administrative environment, i.e. in particular cooperation with the City Hall was judged to be troublesome and will be discussed further in section 6.6 (Possible Reform). Estates appeared to be identified more with a place or neighbourhood rather than an institution. Residents’ involvement in Estates’ activities was judged to be low by the interviewees. However, the perception of Estate Councils’ work by local residents was, on the whole, positive. Especially if judged on respondents’ declared future involvement in local affairs.

### **6.5. Social involvement: interest-based activities of neighbourhoods and individual residents**

The objective of this section is to learn what activities are considered civic, who tends to be involved in local affairs and why. I discuss examples of ‘negative’ and successful activities and new neighbourhood-based civil society organisations. I focus on the issue of qualifying residents’ actions as ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ highlighting efforts needed to transform an initiative into a workable project (procedures) and the fact that being ‘active’ does not necessarily mean being ‘a good citizen’. As actions and activities are interest-based or issue-oriented, a ‘positive’ involvement can be interpreted as a successful effort for *publico bono*. That is why it was found to be relevant to investigate the issue of the perception of interest-based activities quoting City and Estate authorities. As successful initiatives contribute to community cohesion, the latter is the focus of subsection 6.5.1.

A democratic system by definition provides procedures and tools that safeguard potential social involvement and it is in the context of procedural democracy that the condition of civil society is debated. In the community context, the word *civic* implies the duties and obligations of belonging to a community<sup>391</sup>. For the City Hall, the Mayor included, the city is a whole. However, the city is composed of a number of small communities that have their own aims, goals and problems to be solved and their objectives do not necessary have to correspond to the priorities of the authorities and the wellbeing of the whole city as a unit.

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<sup>391</sup> In the context of the government of a town or city, that is in the local government context, the word *civil* is used in connection with the city administration, i.e. civil service.

Civil society's activities are interest-based and/or issue-oriented. It is difficult to qualify an activity as one or the other. Distinguishing between interest-based and issue-oriented activities is particularly difficult in the case of neighbourhoods. It is easier to identify a need and claim that an activity aimed at satisfying the need is interest-based. However, an objective to improve living standards can also be interpreted as an issue relevant to a community.

City Councillor Kręglewski (Interview 2007) said that initiatives of organised groups of citizens "are treated with respect by the City" however appreciation of civil society as the one that pursues interest-based or issue-oriented activities was troublesome for the interviewees. The problem is in part rooted in the communist idea of a 'common good' and the vague distinction between a 'private' interest and a shared interest. A hidden assumption that community should act collectively for everyone's good was present in many responses. This hidden assumption correlates well with interpreting the meaning of the word *civic* as obligations and duties to the community. City Official 1 debated the boundary between civic and non-civic activities and, in reference to some citizens' activities, used the word *pieniactwo* (literally litigious behaviour). Even though nowadays *pieniactwo* has different connotations<sup>392</sup> and generally refers to making a fuss, i.e. to a noisy disordered behaviour, the use of the word was symptomatic of not recognising some activities or actions as civic. Despite the declared respect, a number of the interviewees did not appreciate some manifestations of residents' involvement (*cf.* social consultations, subsection 5.4.1). Consequently, I decided to investigate the issue of the perception of interest-based activities further.

From the point of view of local authorities residents occasionally take 'negative' initiatives/actions. Jankowiak, a Member of the Board of Wielkopolskie Voivodship said that:

Residents may take actions that disturb local development. (Jankowiak, Interview 2007)

A 'disturbing action' is an action which does not offer a workable alternative solution. It is disturbing in the sense that it delays local development as all protests must be analysed. Protesting residents may not be competent in law and aware of some procedures but have the right to voice their opinions on local issues of vital relevance to them, i.e. to a

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<sup>392</sup> Originally it referred only to poorly grounded cases which needed adjudication.

particular area. Their actions may be void. However, if a resident or a group of citizens obstruct an initiative, their actions may be judged to be non-civic and thus negative. Naming some examples of residents' activities negative is evaluative. In fact, most interviewees hesitated when labelling activities of larger groups of residents as negative. They spoke about different perspectives in which the activities of civil society could be evaluated. Officials of the City Hall and the Mayor of Poznań criticised various residents' activities most. Nearly all of the 'negative' examples given were examples of actions taken by a single resident or a small group of residents.

It is impossible for local authorities to approve of all demands voiced by the residents. Pacia from the Wielkopolskie Voivodship Office gave an example of an NGO's negative conduct.

Sometimes social activities transform into litigious activities for no reason. For example, once the people who organise the Equality Parade insisted the parade would proceed along a particular street and would not accept any other route. I do not think that all demands of civil society can be approved of. (Pacia, Wielkopolskie Voivodship Office, Interview 2007)

Reflecting upon the conduct of some local activists, City Hall Official 1 said:

Sometime ago I came to the conclusion that members of the community should not be too active because if they were, we all would go nuts. Some temperance is a must. I have difficulties identifying good citizens from insane ones. A person who keeps writing complaints about the City Hall officials' inefficiency and neglect may get written replies from the City Hall saying that the complaints are not well-grounded. Surely such a person is an active citizen. However, a really active citizen should distinguish between what is workable and what is not. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

City Hall Official 4 gave examples from her own experience describing two types of conduct by citizens that are a burden to local authorities and like City Hall Official 1 spoke about procedures.

If one is active and persistent, such a citizen may be perceived as pushy, onerous but may be right. [...] If one is pushy, disregards procedures and his or her cause is ill-founded, we try to explain that unfortunately the person is wrong and procedures are to be followed by everybody. There are people who keep insisting on implementing his or her initiative, keep troubling us with one letter after another, in which they repeat the same arguments regardless of our efforts to explain. Such an activity is void. [...] those who pursue negative activities are 'noisy'. They are querulous malcontents who question initiatives of other people. They can be envy driven and dishonour others for no other reason but to block the others' initiatives. They want to be recognised and popular. (City Hall Official 4, Interview 2007)

Mayor Grobelny and Jankowiak, a member of the Board of Wielkopolskie Voivodship, gave examples of disputes on a recent project of the third ring road which would affect many Estates and was opposed most strongly by residents of Edwardowo Estate. All parties were consulted and protests considered in due time. From the legislative perspective:

[...] it is the law that limits protests. One can write petitions, go to court and the court ruling is final. [...] Before the final ruling by the court, issues can be disputed. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

However, the immediacy of the project implementation gave rise to new 'noisy' protests. Right before the works were to start, groups and movements came into being arguing that the area was too beautiful to be destroyed by the ring road. They would not accept that the consultation time was over and no other solution was workable (Jankowiak, Interview 2007).

Stuligrosz MP gave an example of the situation in Za Cytatela Estate where some residents had unlawfully annexed lots adjacent to their residence and would not accept the fact that they had broken the law. Instead of accepting legal and rational arguments they created a pointless conflict between them and local authorities. City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki (Interview 2007) gave an example of a conflict among residents of Wola Estate which City authorities are unable to solve. Neighbours are in conflict about the route and width of a local road. In the past some residents had obtained a permit to extend their gardens in spite of the fact that this would limit the access of other residents to their lots. The City authorities have offered arbitration based on goodwill and legal regulations, aiming at conflict settlement, however the conflict persists because neighbours are not willing to compromise with one another.

A Ławica Estate Councillor gave an example of 10 residents who obstructed a road construction project. The objective of the project is to improve access to the airport.

Bukowska Street is to be widened with additional lanes. Screens are to be mounted to reduce noise. They will make businesses located along a part of the street less visible to potential customers. If 100 residents approve of the change and 10 are against it, does the smaller group behave in a disorderly manner? (Zagrocki, Interview 2007)

The 10 residents have the right to protest and it is not necessarily 'selfish'. However local government is responsible for the wellbeing of the whole municipality whereas local

residents frequently concentrate on their own problems. There is an apparently unsolvable conflict of interests<sup>393</sup>.

The residents of Poznań who have a problem that needs to be solved can seek guidance from Estate or City Councillors and the City Hall. Councillors and City Hall officials must patiently deal with complaints. Bondyra pointed at local authorities' role in reducing the number of potential conflict situations.

Local residents have the right to be critical and it is the duty of the City authorities to explain to the residents the complexity of issues raised. (Dr Bondyra, AMU, Department of Sociology, Local Government Research Group, Interview 2007)

Residents can press authorities to find a solution to their problems. The question is if interest-based groups have learned to compromise. Compromising is the 'art' of recognising the need for mutual concessions.

Łazarz Estate Councillor Pucher tracked back some ill-founded criticism of local government activities to the communist 'welfare' state in which people became used to the expectation that things will be done for them.

In communist Poland there was this popular saying '2,000 *zloties* are your due, whether you stand up, or whether you lie down' [which conveys the same sense as 'They pretend to pay us and we pretend to work']. This 'philosophy' was very popular. Workers felt little identity with state companies they worked for and people in general could do little out of their own initiative. Citizens hardly identified themselves with the state and had an adverse attitude toward the authorities. Some still have this attitude. Frequently it is fed with populist demands, for example some say "10 pavements must be re-laid this year and we are not interested in where you will find the money". (Pucher, Interview 2007)

Ill-founded criticism may be voiced by over active and passive residents.

Being 'active' does not necessarily mean being 'a good citizen'. This means that egotistic behaviours are not civic and the question is where the borderline between civil society activities and egotistic private interest is. It appeared to be a difficult task for my interviewees too. Jankowiak, a member of the Board of Wielkopolskie Voivodship said that it is "difficult to draw a line between a civic activity and a noisy disordered behaviour" (Jankowiak, Interview 2007). According to Stuligrosz MP:

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<sup>393</sup> The works eventually started in 2010. In 2007-2010 the old parliamentary Act on Public Roads, dated 21 March 1985, Journal of Laws, 1985, No. 14, Item 60 and other relevant Acts were amended several times to ease procedures.

The borderline between rational thinking about something of common concern and noisy disordered behaviour is liquid and difficult to draw, because at the beginning it is hard to see the gist of the problem and find workable solutions and thus to distinguish between a fuss and a civic initiative. It is hard to see where the fuss ends. Unfortunately noisy disordered behaviour is manifested in every debate. This is the problem of person's attitude toward community life, to neighbours, and toward regular contacts with others who share the same space. (Stuligrosz MP, Interview 2007)

Two examples illustrating both egotistically private interest-based and community-oriented activities were given by an Estate Councillor:

There is a lady who keeps coming to talk to me and she opposes the community-based initiative of a football field for children. She wants the place to remain peaceful and quiet. However, when asked who should take care of safety and order there, she says city authorities are responsible for the place. Sometimes I wish she went there and picked up all the trash that is unlawfully disposed there. There is another lady who keeps writing letters complaining about Miastkowska Street. Everything went wrong when the street was re-designed and paved. She is right even if other people think she is a nuisance. [...] I am impressed with her involvement. (Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, Interview 2007)

City Councillor Mączkowski also found drawing a line between negative and positive actions difficult saying that:

It cannot be regulated by law. It is shaped by the sensitivity of people who take part in public life. A protest against the route of the new ring road is reasonable because local residents do not wish the quality of their life to deteriorate. Arguments supporting a grand [City authorities'] vision of City development may be ill-founded as they may ignore the needs of local residents. (City Councillor Mączkowski, Interview 2007)

The councillor referred to a project that could improve the traffic situation in Poznań and contribute to the wellbeing of the community at large, perhaps at the expense of some local communities. He drew attention to different evaluations of the project which depend on whether it is viewed from the perspective of local communities or the perspective of the City Hall and the Mayor. Local residents' acceptance of negative side-effects of a project that will improve the life of many is painful but sometimes sacrifices are necessary. As one Estate Councillor said:

If one decides to live in a given location, one makes a decision. The decision should be informed, i.e. one should consider the benefits and the losses living in a given location entails. If we want better public transportation, we have to agree that a bus route will run in the neighbourhood. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

In general, according to another councillor (City and Antoninek-Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007), strong opinions are voiced about most new investments and the problem is that those who negatively evaluate a project do not offer any workable solutions. Indeed, civic activities should be rational, i.e. they should be based on constructive, substantial arguments. The issue of taking responsibility for one's own actions needs to be recognised by civil society organisations and individual citizens. One City Councillor said "Rationality is the key concept while drawing the borderline between negative and positive activities of society" (City Councillor Szczuciński, Interview 2007). Motivations that drive people to take action should be well-grounded and pragmatic.

Most citizens' initiatives are born out of dissatisfaction. Judging an action to be negative requires careful consideration as attitudes and emotions negatively influence objectivity. In conflict situations the city authorities are perceived as the 'bad guy', i.e. the 'bad', stronger body which is against the 'poor, weak' citizens. At the same time some citizens' actions 'disturb' the work of the local government. This perception is deceptive but popular if emotions surface. When local residents emotionally protest against a new project, as one councillor argued, it is because they are involved in what matters to them:

If a new development concerns me, I am emotionally involved. If I do not like it, I feel anger and regret that something I got used to will be changed. The change will affect my life. I am not surprised that people resist changes and are not willing to compromise. (City Councillor Ganowicz, Interview 2007)

Emotional reactions are human. City Hall Official 1 admitted that:

We [City administration] pass our own judgements on whether somebody's activities are reasonable or not. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

The human factor plays a role in actions taken by individuals or small groups in particular. Moreover, it may also condition judgements. Purcher (Deputy Chairman of Św. Łazarz Estate Council Interview 2007) said:

Initiatives are associated with their authors and if we think well of the author, we tend to think his or her initiative is good. If we do not think well of somebody, we think their initiative is wrong. (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of Św. Łazarz Estate Council Interview 2007)

Łybacka MP commented on negative emotions as follows:



Positive actions result from true involvement. Something can irritate me and my first motivation to act can be a negative emotion. This initial emotion can lead to me suggesting to improve something. But if one does not like something and does not listen to the arguments presented, this person is likely to behave in a noisy and disordered way. Citizens' actions should have true motivation. In local democracy as in any democracy, decisions are taken by the majority. I may not like them but there they are. (Łybacka MP, Interview 2007)

Interestingly City Hall Official 1 acknowledged that Polish civil society is already capable of drawing borderlines between an unjustified activity and a well-grounded activity for a good cause:

In a sociological perspective, the situation is different. [...] Public opinion also draws a final line. [...] Somehow society passes its own verdicts which surely are not objective either. (City Hall Official 1, Interview 2007)

An activity is not civic if the involved persistently ignore the needs of others. Jałowiecki (2005:26)<sup>394</sup> claims that the need for the active involvement of citizens as the condition for local *rozwój* [progress, growth, advancement] is 'an ideological myth' with has little to do with reality as residents who get involved "are plainly driven by their own interest". He distinguishes between 'negative' actions and 'positive' actions. For him a protest constitutes 'negative' action<sup>395</sup>. As has been demonstrated, such an evaluation should be treated with caution. Jałowiecki does not give sufficient recognition to the fact that civil society activities are interest-based.

'Positive' actions and activities are also interest-based. 'Positive' involvement can be interpreted as a successful effort for *publico bono*. By and large successful actions are group actions. They may be initiated by a single resident but as most initiatives require financial investment, a group effort is needed to execute them. Local community members have already learned that first they should win the support of their Estate Council. Therefore:

[...] if a citizen comes up with an initiative, s/he goes to the Estate Council and presents it. A citizen does not have to be a member of the council. Everybody can cooperate with Estate authorities, can be active in the Council's commissions. If his or her initiative is reasonable and workable then the Estate Council presents it to the City Hall. (City Hall Official 4, Interview 2007)

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<sup>394</sup> Quoted in chapter 2, subsection 2.2.2.

<sup>395</sup> A 'positive' action, according to Jałowiecki, is one with which the living conditions are improved. "Citizens' involvement in positive activities is much more limited but sometimes they do get involved; *ad hoc* committees for laying water or gas pipes are an example." (Jałowiecki 2005:27) [trans. OM].

City and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski explained the steps taken if residents' present a petition:

Residents may also write a petition. Say, residents want a bike lane or route. They write a petition addressed to the City Hall. The Estate Council attaches its positive opinion about the initiative. And then the ZDM [municipal service provider: roads and pavements] analyses the initiative. Is the suggested location of the bike lane viable? Will it be safe for everybody concerned? Is the necessary expenditure justified? Do many bikers ride there? Will the bike lane improve transportation for example from a recreational area like the Mata Lake to neighbouring Estates? (...) I know of petitions that have been carefully considered and were successful. If a petition is supported by the Estate Council, it is more likely to be successful. (City Councillor and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski, Interview 2007)

Residents of Poznań can present their initiatives to the City Hall personally, however, as City Hall Official 4 said:

The voice of Estate Councils' is stronger. Estates are accessory units and have some financial resources they can dedicate to their initiatives. (City Hall Official 4, Interview 2007)

An effort is needed to transform an initiative into a workable project. Examples of successful initiatives of Estate Councillors and residents were numerous. City and former Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Dudziak gave an example of an initiative of the Jeżyce Estate Council:

An Estate Councillor informs the Estate Council that traffic lights are needed at a crossing. The Estate Council analyses the situation and decides the traffic lights are indeed needed. The next question is money. Unfortunately the Estate Council cannot do everything alone. Councillors go to the City Hall. We struggled for 3 years to have traffic lights mounted at the crossing of Matejki and Zalewskich Streets. We managed and it is an example that some things can be done 'from the bottom'. (City Councillor Dudziak, Interview 2007)

Graczyk, Deputy Director in the Cabinet of Poznań Region (rural) Powiat Staroste, reported that thanks to joint protests of the residents and Council of Ogrody Estate an avenue of trees has not been cut down. Speaking about upgrading neglected parts of Winiary Estate the local councillor claimed:

In Winiary Estate there was this lot where a tram line ended. In 1970 the line was extended to Piątkowska Street. Nothing happened in the lot. There were only deteriorating tracks. We decided to upgrade the lot. Today there is the Winiary Outdoor Estate Sports and Recreation Centre. There is a football field with artificial grass, basketball court, volleyball court, playground for kids with sandboxes, swings, climbers. The football field is a bit smaller than it should be but we have done all we could. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

Numerous other examples of successful civic activities were given. For example: in Starołęka-Minikowo-Marlewo Estate residents successfully advocated re-routing the traffic on a part of the street they considered dangerous (City and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wisniewski); in Ławica Estate bus stops were upgraded, routes and timetables of buses were changed to serve the local community better, a kids' playground was located and furnished, a green square was furnished with benches (Ławica Estate Councillor Skrzypczak); in Winiary Estate football games are organised, parking lots were paved, the lighting of pedestrian underground passages was improved, some buildings were made accessible to people with disabilities (City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki); in Sołacz Estate the old green park has been upgraded and the tradition of public summer concerts was re-introduced (City and Sołacz Estate Councillor Nowowiejska); in Św. Łazarz Estate pavements and sports fields were upgraded (City and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Woškowiak). All these undertakings were originally initiatives of Estate Councils or individual members of the Estate community. Most required small financial investment which was secured by the Estate Council<sup>396</sup>. The facilities and events have met various needs of local communities.

Protests can be 'positive' actions. The quality of arguments used is essential to the success of protests. Arguments are likely to gain strength if debated. Stuligrosz MP referred to his own experience while working on town and country planning projects.

One of the greatest experiences I had with civil society was when we had announced that spatial development plans would be designed. The community would strongly involve themselves in discussing the new plans, both in a positive and negative way. Local town and country planning projects demonstrate full self-realisation of civil society as local residents exercise their right to influence the process of passing local development Acts. Development plans are highly relevant to residents starting from the valuation of properties that can gain value or, unfortunately, lose it by wrong town planning decisions. Local residents' actions can shape the area and that refers to almost everything that is happening in a location. Residents can have an impact on decisions about the type of buildings that will be erected, the type and structure of land ownership [...] whether we want to have only single family houses or also shops or allow for small production or service companies or whatever. These decisions are based on residents' actions and local residents are active. (Stuligrosz MP, Interview 2007)

Strong arguments and a workable alternative solution promise success. 'Negative' actions may have strong popular support but they lack the two other features of 'positive' actions.

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<sup>396</sup> A percentage of Estate capitation money dedicated to initiatives from the Estate budget.

Most features of negative actions reflect personality types. Negative activities have been qualified as litigious, intemperate, ill-founded, noisy, disordered, undesirable, pointless, unjustified, lawless, querulous, irrational, unreasonable, emotional, and selfish. In contrast, positive activities have been described as well-grounded, reasonable, rational, pragmatic, lawful, involved, responsible, informed, community-based, constructive, open to discussion and conciliatory. The number of clearly void and/or 'negative' actions can be reduced with the provision of sound information on particular planned developments. Residents' activities tended to be judged as negative if according to local authorities, they were not conducive to workable solutions. The main point was that active citizens should take responsibility for their activities, accept that there are legal regulations and be considerate of other residents' needs. Many initiatives have been successful and the role Estate Councils play in presenting or supporting local initiatives is not to be underestimated. Successful actions are by and large outcomes of engagement, trust and civic cooperation which includes joining a group.

#### **6.5.1. Social cohesion**

Social cohesion can be increased with the strengthening of relationships. Relationships are the focus of social capital. According to Schuller (2001) social capital can be measured by attitudes/values, membership/participation and trust levels. In this section I refer to the tradition of working together and review some patterns of residents' collaboration with the City authorities and new initiatives of acting collectively. The focus is on Estate based associations of residents and their activities. I also present statistical data from the questionnaire research on residents' involvement and willingness to collaborate with others and compare it with external data on Poland, mainly from surveys published by the Public Opinion Research Centre (henceforth CBOS<sup>397</sup>).

Before 1989 local communities would act together because it was the only way they could successfully persuade local authorities that something had to be done. Much of what local groups achieved then was in part paid from their own pockets and then became state property. It was the only way to get connected to a phone line, to have a water supply or sewage collection system constructed, electricity and gas delivered and to build local roads. In order to pursue their objectives, local leaders of an initiative would propose that other interested neighbours join a 'committee', i.e. to form a group that would act together.

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<sup>397</sup> *Centrum Badania Opinii Publicznej* (CBOS) [The Public Opinion Research Center], [www.cbos.pl](http://www.cbos.pl).

The committees were not registered and they acted as *ad hoc* groups having a single aim or project. Thanks to committees, much technical infrastructure in each Estate was improved. Committees cooperated with the City administration or other municipal units. Frequently committee members covered the full cost of a project and only later municipal authorities would return some money back to them in the form of long term reduction of fixed fees for using the infrastructure<sup>398</sup>.

In 1989 the parliamentary Act on Associations<sup>399</sup> was introduced. Committees were replaced with associations or ‘common’ associations see chapter 2, subsection 2.2.2). Associations are juristic persons, however ‘common’ associations are not. ‘Common’ associations of local residents have replaced residents’ committees. Their funds come solely from membership fees. Associations, on the other hand, are funded with membership fees, donations and, as they are juristic persons, they can do what Estate Councils cannot, i.e. they can enter contracts with other juristic persons. Associations have long term objectives. ‘Common’ associations are usually founded to solve a problem of a neighbourhood and dissolved once their projects are completed. The membership fee is equal to residents’ contribution to the project execution<sup>400</sup>. Both kinds of associations founded by Estate residents are registered NGOs the purpose of which is to improve the residents’ quality of life. They may take part in municipal NGO grant competition and in competitions organised by the Voivodship. Associations are independent whereas Estates as organisations are dependant on the City government. In what follows, both kinds of associations are referred to as associations unless differences between them need to be highlighted.

Associations of residents do cooperate with the City Hall. Today the financial arrangement between the city and a ‘common’ association is based on a contract: the cost of a construction works project is covered in 50% by the City and in 50% from local residents’

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<sup>398</sup> It needs to be remembered that the concept of transparent taxation was non-existent under communism.

<sup>399</sup> Act on Associations, dated 7 April 1989, Journal of Laws, 1989, No. 20, Item 104, (consolidated text based on: Journal of Laws, 2001, No. 79, Item 855, Journal of Laws, 2003, No. 96, Item 874, Journal of Laws, 2004, No. 102, Item 1055, Journal of Laws, 2007, No. 112, Item 766). The Act was amended but no major changes were introduced.

<sup>400</sup> For detailed instruction how to found a ‘common’ association see: \_\_\_, ‘Wykaz dokumentów niezbędnych do zarejestrowania stowarzyszenia zwykłego w Wydziale Spraw Obywatelskich, Urzędu Miasta Poznania’ [List of documents necessary to register common association in the Civic Affairs Department, the City Hall of Poznań], City Hall of Poznań, *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Miasta Poznania* [Public Bulletin of the City of Poznań], [http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/sprawy.html?co=opis&sp\\_id=1787](http://bip.city.poznan.pl/bip/public/bip/sprawy.html?co=opis&sp_id=1787), INWE\_LUD.doc, accessed 12.07.2010.

pockets. The finished construction is municipal. In exceptional cases the City finances 75% of a project. To illustrate the changes, a short history of a provider of municipal services can be given. Water and sewage services in the city of Poznań are provided by Aquanet S.A. company which is also responsible for the relevant infrastructure. The company was – till 1997 – a state company located in Poznań. In 1996 the parliamentary Act on Communal Property Management<sup>401</sup> was issued and the state company was transformed into a municipal company whose sole owner was the City of Poznań. In 2005 the status of Aquanet was changed to a joint stock company. City Hall Official 2, quoted above, said that in other cities in Poland similar solutions have been introduced and offered a description of the execution of an investment project in public utilities initiated by local residents.

I think the Poznań solution is good because it is fully democratic. [...] Local residents are in charge of the project from the beginning to the end. They found an association. They initiate the investment project including the public tender procedure. They choose the contractor. They consult experts and construction inspection officials. They take care of the entire investment project. Finally it is Aquanet which performs the final (completion) inspection. One of the contract provisions is that the thus built infrastructure becomes municipal property. [...] All projects truly involve local community members. They become experts in construction works. One chairman of an association took unpaid leave from his employer to supervise road construction works. He made sure that everything was perfect. The work of volunteers is not easy but if they manage to build a road, they care about the road. It is 'theirs'. (City Hall Official 2, Interview 2007)

However, the number of exceptional cases grows as citizens are increasingly less willing to pay for public construction works. In response:

City authorities have introduced a kind of local tax called the connection fee [*adiacenty*]. Residents who co-finance a project do not pay the fee. Those who do not want to co-finance the project must pay the connection fee to be connected to municipal utilities like the water/sewage system and so on. The fee depends on the value of a given residential building per square metre as its value grows with the connection. (City Hall Official 2, Interview 2007)

The connection fee is a public 'tribute' paid by property owners or leaseholders to the local government. It is justified on the grounds that the property will have a higher value due to the undertakings of the local authorities.

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<sup>401</sup> Act on Communal Property Management, dated 20 December 1997, Journal of Laws, 1997, No. 9, Item 43 (consolidated text based on: Journal of Laws, 1997, No. 9, Item 43, Journal of Laws, 1997, No. 106, Item 679, No. 121, Item 770, Journal of Laws, 1998, No. 106, Item 668, Journal of Laws, 2002, No. 113, Item 984, Journal of Laws, 2003, No. 96, Item 874, No. 199, Item 1937, Journal of Laws, 2008, No. 223, Item 1458, Journal of Laws, 2009, No. 19, Item 100 and 101, No. 157, Item 1241).

Much has been achieved by 'common' associations which are mostly neighbours' associations. Only in 2003 the city of Poznań signed contracts with 53 'common' associations of residents. The contracts were worth 10.3 million PLN including 3.5 million contributed by local residents. As a result 4.7 km of roads, 1.6 km of a rain water collection system, 1.3 km of power lines, a 5 km sewage collection system and a 2.8 km water supply system were constructed. In *Gazeta Wyborcza On-line*, Poznań City supplement published on 9 March 2004, one of the City Hall Officials explained why 'common' associations are effective:

Last year, Okrzei and Kołłątaja Streets in [the former city district] Wilda, Abrahama and Włada Streets in [the former city district] Grunwald, many streets in the Franowo housing Estate or Owidiusza and Synów Pułku Streets in [the former city district] Jeżyce were not paved yet. Today they are elegant streets paved thanks to local residents' involvement. Local residents covered around 35% of the investment cost. The rest is covered by the City. Annually the City dedicates about 6 million PLN to joint investments in roads. This money is used by the ZDM [City Unit: roads and pavements]. The ZDM alone could construct only 2-3 roads with that money. With residents' involvement the ZDM can co-finance the construction of 10 roads. How is that possible? Residents are in a better situation. They can purchase goods cheaper, it is easier for them to carry tenders, they can negotiate with contractors. Also some roads are cheaper as residents give up on for example the rain water collection system<sup>402</sup>. [trans. OM]

'Common' associations in particular keep co-financing various municipal 'investments' in upgrading neighbourhoods' technical infrastructure.

Since 1989 the situation has not changed much except for gas and electricity supply systems which are no longer co-financed by local residents. The City Council supports different local initiatives but local residents must organise themselves and found an association. Many examples of initiatives of associations were given (see Table 6.5 above). The initiatives range from ones aimed at integrating local residents to huge projects of investments in technical infrastructure. Residents' associations work hand in hand with Estate Councils. Estate-based associations have a higher operational potential than Estate Councils and can cooperate directly with the City administration (for example run in NGO project competitions and execute their projects themselves). However the cooperation between associations and the City Hall is not without its problems and much depends on the determination of residents. City Hall Official 2 and City Councillor Przybylak were of

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<sup>402</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2004) '*Miasto i mieszkańcy razem budują infrastrukturę*' [The city and residents build technical infrastructure together], *Gazeta Wyborcza On-line, Poznań City Supplement*, 9 March, <http://miasta.gazeta.pl/poznan/1,36037,1956185.html>, accessed 14.05.2009.

the opinion that this form of cooperation between citizens and the City Hall of Poznań increases social cohesion:

Joint construction projects do not only make residents cooperate financially with the City. They build bonds among local residents. (City Hall Official 2, Interview 2007)

Associations are great because their local members act together as members of civil society do. (City Councillor Przybylak, Interview 2007)

They both said that bonds between residents are strengthened while working on a project and their opinions were shared by other interviewees.

Clearly more can be achieved if residents act together. Journalist Przybylska noticed that:

[...] many initiatives are not events. They are but a starting point of various activities which require long-time involvement. (Przybylska, Interview 2007)

All these examples speak for the determination of the most active Estate residents. However City Councillor Ganowicz underlined that no one can be forced to be active:

Of course, every individual decides on his/her own, what impact they want to have on decisions relevant to them. They have a choice to have a say or to watch what is happening. Every person has a free choice. (City Councillor Ganowicz, Interview 2007)

New civil society organisations emerge in response to new needs. Their emergence and activities speak for the responsiveness of local civil society. Associations that are not 'common' have long time objectives. The Association of Ławica Estate Friends<sup>403</sup> is an example.

[...] in terms of proposing initiatives both the Council and the Association are equally active. Sometimes our Association gives the Council an incentive to develop a new initiative. (Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, Interview 2007)

Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak who is also Chairman and founder of the Association of Ławica Estate Friends drew attention to the fact that the Association unlike the Estate Council can, for instance, rent municipal properties to be used for the Estate community's benefit. It has applied to the City Hall to rent former military grounds:

They were state property and now are municipal property. We want to build a football field and basketball court there. However, the City's approval is required. Ławica Estate deserves decent recreational facilities. [...] We have been struggling

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<sup>403</sup> Association of Ławica Estate Friends [*Stowarzyszenie Przyjaciół Osiedla Ławica*] (op. cit.).



with the City Hall for several years already and it may happen that we will lose. Our Association decided we would lease part of the ground from the City for as long as the City agrees. According to information obtained from the Property Management Department it would cost us about 200 PLN per year which is peanuts. We would buy inexpensive fencing, the Estate Council would buy some equipment and we will have an outdoor recreational centre. However, the City administration has to take a decision and is far from taking one. At present we can do nothing more. (Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, Interview 2007)

The effectiveness of the Association is limited by the efficiency of the City Hall. At the time of the interview the Association was successfully negotiating another small project with the City Hall:

At the crossing of Modrzejewskiej Street and Szczurkiewiczów Street there is a tiny lot we will hopefully lease from the City authorities in autumn. We will turn it into a kids' playground with swings and a sandbox because kids have no place to play. Mothers keep pushing carts and there are no benches on which they could sit down and rest. (Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, Interview 2007)

The project was completed in 2007.

To strengthen local residents' identification with their Estates, associations and Estate Councils organise cultural events. One of them is the 'Estate Day'. It is a festivity which aims at strengthening residents' interest in the affairs of the community-based Estate. It is assumed that they increase the Estate's social capital by strengthening residents' identification with the neighbourhood, i.e. residents' positive attitude to the Estate.

Local community festivities are mainly public outdoor events. They include games for children, competitions, some events related to the history of the area, and the characteristic Bamberkas<sup>404</sup> are there too. (Bojarski, political journalist, Interview 2007)

The main organiser of the Estate Day is the Estate Council.

It is worth the effort because the community sees that we are doing something. Some residents come and see that things are actually happening. And some get really involved. (Ławica Estate Councillor, Zagrocki, Interview 2007)

The interviewed Estate Councillors and journalist Bojarski mentioned the strong support of the City Council for the festivities. Bojarski referred to festivities organised within Estates

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<sup>404</sup> Bamberka refers to a woman dressed in the traditional Bambergian style. The Bambergers were Germans who moved from the area of Bamberg (Upper Franconia, Germany) to villages surrounding Poznań (18<sup>th</sup> Century). Polonisation of this group was voluntary and progressed very fast. The best-known manifestation of this culture are characteristic female dresses.

which have a long village tradition, namely to the Days of Jeżyce and Górczyn<sup>405</sup> Estates. The communities there apparently have a stronger identity compared to new Estates.

The Ławica Estate community has a relatively short history. The Estate Councillor was initially critical about local community festivities in the form of the Estate Day:

Estate Day festivities are mostly for children because they are fun. Some parents come too. Then in the afternoon some adult residents may come for a beer. That is all. A community festivity is a huge organisational effort but the results are poor. For the City it is an easy way of claiming that they did what they should. Some 8-10,000 PLN is spent and the task is completed but, sorry, it is a lot of effort and money is wasted. (Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, Interview 2007)

City and Świerczewo Estate Councillor Nowicka was also troubled by the amount of money spent on Estate festivities. However, she was of the opinion that the festivities may be valuable provided that they facilitate information spread and enhance social cohesion. City and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor Wośkowiak said that the festivities meet with interest of local residents but he wished residents' level of involvement was higher.

Residents' involvement in such 'ready made' events is low and in 2006 Ławica Estate Councillors decided to replace Ławica Estate Day with the Neighbours' Day to increase residents' involvement in the organisation of the event.

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<sup>405</sup> Wośkowiak, City and Św. Łazarz Estate Councillor, mentioned the involvement of the *Krag* [circle of friends] Club in the organisation of the Św. Łazarz Estate Day. The *Krag* Club was founded 25 years ago as a social organisation of a housing cooperative.

Figure 6.3 Poster inviting residents of Ławica Estate to one of the Neighbour's Day events.



Neighbours in this residential area are encouraged to organise outdoor picnics with layered cakes paid for with City Council money. Though local Estate Councillors who were interviewed did not sound very enthusiastic about the participation in picnics, they shared the view that the Neighbours' Day (Figure 6.3) strengthens social cohesion. The Neighbours' Day<sup>406</sup>, according to Ławica Estate Councillor Sobczak, helps groups of neighbours to form a micro-community within the Estate and strengthen friendships that evolved 30 years ago when neighbours moved in.

The first time we held the Neighbours' Day it did not work on the Aktorów Street. The organising resident there was left almost alone to eat the cake. But next to the small shopping centre and on the Lisa Witalisa Square it worked great. On Andersena Street a tent was put up and there and on Wieczorynki Street the cakes disappeared in 10 minutes. And the best was the enclave of about 20 houses on Rezedowa Street. Residents there function like one big family. They would set up pavilions, bring champagne, wine, beer and truly celebrate the Neighbour's Day. In those places it really worked. However, the average picnic attendance on anyone street was 20 to 30 people. The situation was that people would get together but many would come only for a short while, for the cake. (Sobczak, Ławica Estate Councillor, Interview 2007)

<sup>406</sup> "European Neighbours' Day is an initiative of the European Federation of Local Solidarity (E.F.L.S.). Its objective is to foster community cohesion in Europe, by creating networks for exchanges on neighbourly and community practices", <http://www.european-neighbours-day.com>, accessed 15.12.2009

Social cohesion may not be an issue for particular residents. However, it is most important for Estate Councillors who view various festivities as an opportunity to spread information, manifest the existence of Estate Councils and their involvement in the community life and to win residents' support for some community-oriented projects, not necessarily cultural. The work on increasing social cohesion is a long-time effort aimed at changing residents' attitudes and values. [...] we are learning from our experience. This year we will avoid the mistakes we have identified. Community integration is not only about pulling forces together to organise festivities and that should be clear to everybody. It is important that residents become aware that they are responsible for their Estates. Some people would like to do more but others shut the gates to their lots and say they are disinterested. (Sobczak, Ławica Estate Councillor, Interview 2007)

Civil society keeps evolving in an ongoing process of adjusting to changing circumstances. The effectiveness of small scale cultural events in fostering cohesion was considered low by some interviewees as participation had been modest. Statistical data from the questionnaires can throw some light on social cohesion in the Estate communities'. Residents were asked: 'Have you ever accomplished something working together with your neighbours?' (Table 6.13). 35.5% of respondents from Ławica Estate said 'yes'. The percentage of affirmative answers given by respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate was 14.7%. The percentages were higher in comparison to affirmative answers to questions about their past involvement in (group) activities which aimed to benefit the City or the Estate community (*cf.* section 6.4, Tables 6.10 and 6.11 respectively). It follows that the City and the Estate are simply more distant from residents than neighbours.

Table 6.13 Have you ever accomplished something working together with your neighbours?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	14.7	35.5
No	85.3	64.5
Total	100.0	100.0
Examples from Św. Łazarz Estate: food collection for the poor, upgrading a pavement, painting a corridor, mutual help, seeding a lawn, taking part in a debate on shaping the environment of the housing facility, protecting a building against flooding, struggle with a housing facility owner, limiting the access to a backyard to drunkards, introduction of a ban on presence of strangers in a common facility		
Examples from Ławica Estate: involvement in the decision-making on the distance of a local road from front gardens, financial and organisational involvement in paving a street, building a new church, installation of telephone lines, laying water and sewage collection systems, extension of bus lines, successful blocking of unjustified decisions made by the City Hall e.g. decisions on building new houses which would block access to the neighbouring municipal forest, keeping streets tidy, developing outdoor sporting facilities for the youth and a kids playground and involvement in the Estate Council or charitable activities		

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

Accomplishments thanks to cooperation with neighbours improve the wellbeing of Estate residents as the examples of neighbours' activities given in Table 6.11 demonstrate.

The measurement of involvement/participation in a young democracy by means of questionnaires is a complex issue. In some respects the results here may appear to be surprising. On the one hand, not many residents declared they had been involved in some city or local activities. On the other hand, very different examples of activities in which residents took part were given by them (see Tables 6.10, 6.11 and 6.13) and most of the examples given must have involved a group of local residents. This may suggest that on the whole, individuals' identification with a group is not very strong in Ławica Estate and weak in Św. Łazarz Estate. The main difference between answers given by respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate and Ławica Estate can be attributed to different characteristics (history and type of housing facilities) of the two Estates (*cf.* chapter 1). Ławica Estate residents live in their own houses which were built when they were members of a cooperative. Under communism housing cooperatives built houses but did not develop technical infrastructure. Residents had many reasons for which they worked together and the need to act together created bonds. Today residents of Ławica Estate have stronger bonds with their neighbours than residents of Św. Łazarz Estate because the first had to work together to solve their problems. The residents of Św. Łazarz, (i.e. in the centre of the

city) did not have to struggle with the problems residents of Ławica Estate did. The apparent stronger identity of the older Św. Łazarz area (tradition) is questionable.

When respondents were asked if they have been a member of some kind of organisation active in their Estate (Table 6.14), over 80% in both Estates said ‘no’.

Table 6.14 Are you a member of some kind of organisation active in the Estate (for example school board, parents’ council at school, sport club, pensioners club, religious organisation, choir)?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	10.3	17.7
No	89.7	82.3
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

10-18% of my respondents were members of a local organisation (Table 6.14)<sup>407</sup>. This level of involvement matches Klon/Jawor data according to which in 2007, 13.2% of Poles aged over 15 years, i.e. 3.8 million, worked voluntarily for *publico bono* (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4 Percentage of Poles aged over 15 years who worked voluntarily for *publico bono*



Source: \_\_\_\_ (2009/2010) ‘Polacy hojni w kryzysie’ [Poles are generous in a crisis], Gazeta Wyborcza On-line, 31 December/1 January, after Klon/Jawor.

The results of any questionnaire research depend on the questions asked and their interpretation by the respondents. The CBOS report of 2007<sup>408</sup> identified that 20% of Poles

<sup>407</sup> Results of my research given above have surely been affected by the structure of the samples from both Estates especially the age structure (cf. Methodology, chapter 4). Consequently, the issue of involvement in group activities needs to be investigated further as larger samples are needed to draw conclusions.

<sup>408</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2008) ‘Polacy o swojej aktywności społecznej’ [Poles about their voluntary/civil activities], Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS), Warszawa, February, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K\\_020\\_08.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2008/K_020_08.PDF), accessed 11.07.2010.

did voluntary unpaid work for their local communities or the needy and 20% worked for civil society organisations. CBOS percentages are higher than Klon/Jawor and my research results. According to CBOS report only 4% worked voluntarily for charities<sup>409</sup> whereas many more supported the needy through donating material goods (44%) or money (43%). 19% worked or provided services as benefactors. This data is confusing and it points to various interpretations of survey questions. This can be further exemplified with a recent change introduced by Klon/Jawor in data collection. Results of its 2007 and 2008 surveys on the number of individuals who made donations to NGOs were 25.3% and 28.6% respectively. In 2009, Klon/Jawor decided to name the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity<sup>410</sup> in its survey and the percentage of those who made donations grew to 54.4%.

An important observation is that Poles do not recognise some of their voluntary involvement in public affairs as an activity *pro publico bono*. CBOS has recently<sup>411</sup> concluded that:

NGOs may be unpopular, and they are associated in public opinion with state institutions, to which they are often tied. However, low membership in such organizations does not mean that citizens are inactive. They operate through informal or semi-formal networks [...]. What needs to be investigated is the impact of this **individualized** and **informal** civil society on the performance, consolidation, or quality of democracy. (Wenzel and Kubik 2009:30, CBOS)

I asked about being friendly with ones' neighbours (Table 6.15 below) and 45.2% of respondents from Ławica Estate answered that (at the time of my research) they had friendly relations with more than 6 neighbours and only 9.7% had none. In Św. Łazarz Estate only 10.3% of respondents had friendly relations with more than 6 neighbours. The distributions of other responses was even: 20.6% of respondents did not have friendly relations with their neighbours, 20.6% had been befriended by 3-4 or 5-6 neighbours. To 'have friendly relations' in the Polish culture as well as calling somebody 'a friend' means that the neighbours go to their neighbours to drink the proverbial cup of tea in the neighbour's house and that they celebrate private occasions together. Poles would not qualify saying 'good morning' to a passing person known by sight as a friendly

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<sup>409</sup> In the report the word *dobroczynność* is used. It refers to charitable activities but this word is not used in any Polish national law and its content is not fixed.

<sup>410</sup> *Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy*, (WOŚP) [The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity Foundation], <http://en.wosp.org.pl/final/>, accessed 18.08.2009.

<sup>411</sup> Wenzel and Kubik (2009) 'Civil Society in Poland. Case study.' (CBOS), [http://www.cbos.pl/PL/wydarzenia/04\\_konferencja/Civil%20society%20in%20Poland.pdf](http://www.cbos.pl/PL/wydarzenia/04_konferencja/Civil%20society%20in%20Poland.pdf), accessed 20.08.2009.

relationship. Knowing that, I asked if they would feel at ease borrowing ‘a cup of sugar’ from their neighbour meaning ‘Could you ask him/her for a favour or help?’ The answers (Table 6.16 below) indicate that almost all respondents could visit their neighbours without prior notification/ an invitation: 85.3% in Św. Łazarz Estate and 96.8% in Ławica Estate said ‘yes’.

Table 6.15 Do you have friendly relations with your neighbours?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
No	20.6	9.7
1 – 2	27.9	21.0
3 – 4	20.6	11.3
5 – 6	20.6	12.9
More than 6	10.3	45.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

Table 6.16 Could you borrow ‘a cup of sugar’ from your neighbour? Could you ask him/her for a favour or help?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	85.3	96.8
No	14.7	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

The answers to the question about ‘a cup of sugar’ confirm that residents of Ławica Estate are more open to cooperation than residents of Św. Łazarz Estate. The results demonstrate the ease with which Poles cooperate. Part of the explanation is rooted in Polish culture which is more community-oriented than individualistic.

In addition to questions about relations with neighbours I sought to explore the notion of trust (Table 6.17). Another report prepared by CBOS in 2006<sup>412</sup> reads:

Poles’ attitude to strangers is an important factor. People who do not have reservations about dealing with strangers are more eager to be involved in politics and [...] to cooperate with others in various areas. The declared trust in most people [...] is less informative but it reflects an inclination to cooperate with others on matters of concern to local community [...] (CBOS, 2006) [trans. OM].

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<sup>412</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2006) ‘*Więzi społeczne a współpraca z innymi ludźmi*’ [Social bond and cooperation with other people], Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS), Warsaw, February, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2006/K\\_034\\_06.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2006/K_034_06.PDF), accessed 11.07.2010.



My question ‘Can people be trusted?’ was general. Most answers were based on commonsense. 61.8% of respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate and 75.8% from Ławica Estate answered ‘yes, but you still have to be careful’. 26.6% of respondents from Św. Łazarz and only 6.5% from Ławica Estate said ‘no’, i.e. people in general cannot be trusted.

Table 6.17 Can people be trusted?

	Św. Łazarz Estate (%)	Ławica Estate (%)
Yes	11.8	17.7
Yes, but you still have to be careful	61.8	75.8
No	26.5	6.5
Total	100.0	100.0

Św. Łazarz Estate N=68

Ławica Estate N=62

The difference in the percentages of negative answers indicates again that residents of Ławica Estate are more open and feel less insecure and alienated than residents of Św. Łazarz Estate.

Since much has changed in Poland since 1989 I was interested in what bothers Posnanians at present. In my questionnaire I asked them to name some of the most urgent problems that needed to be solved. This question was an open one. The answers given varied. Some respondents were concerned about the technical infrastructure, however many raised issues which are of local concern in virtually any city in any EU member state.

Respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate were most concerned about the poor condition of pavements and roads. They drew attention to their Estate being old and the condition of old buildings needing attention. In general, the respondents felt the appeal of the Estate needed improvement and this included taking better care of green areas and improving cleanliness. The second group of problems frequently mentioned were dog excrement left on public footpaths, no place for the youth to play (sports fields) and the decreasing level of public safety. The last was linked with the improper conduct of the youth (for example “young people stroll aimlessly, sit at gates because they have nowhere to go”, “they drink alcoholic drinks, they are noisy”) but primarily it was linked to social issues like alcoholism and homelessness (e.g. “struggle with annoying individuals who keep asking for money to buy spirits”, “What do city guards do if I am afraid to go out after 10 p.m.?”). At the same time respondents suggested some solutions: “taking care of trees, seeding grass in all places

possible”, “designating a lot where dogs can be walked”, “placing recycling bins”. Respondents also complained about a shortage of parking places. This is a common problem in the city but huge in Św. Łazarz Estate as Poznań International Fair grounds and the Arena, also used as a major show hall. Most of those issues could be taken care of by the Estate Council. Residents mentioned much less problems for the solution of which the Estate Council is not responsible e.g. unemployment, high energy and waste collection bills, the aging of the Estate, a decreasing number of young residents, cheaper leases (house/flat owners), high rents (lease holders), flats with no tenants, unsatisfactory quality of public transport and of citizen-City Hall relations, families with many children and no means to support them. The concerns of the respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate indirectly point to their quite strong identification with their Estate. They saw a need to change some things and to take care of the environment in which they live. However, some respondents were unable to distinguish the Estate Council from the City Hall. Unlike in the communist times, respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate were, in general, concerned and did care about the condition of the Estate and their living standards.

Respondents from Ławica Estate were most concerned about the lack of leisure and recreational/sports facilities<sup>413</sup>, in particular for the young (e.g. “in a big Estate like ours there are no sports facilities”; “most residents are interested in having a cultural centre and a sports field”; “no place where the youth could spend their free time”, “no cultural centre for the youth”, “no meeting place”, “an outdoor playground for kids is needed”). In addition to the fact that neither within the Estate or in its neighbourhood are there such facilities, the high frequency with which the issue was mentioned could be attributed in part to the Estate Council and Association of Ławica Estate Friends’ efforts develop the much needed facilities. Respondents were aware (most probably from their own experience) of the relevance of spatial development plans and were of the opinion that municipal grounds within the Estate should serve the community (e.g. “municipal grounds should be developed”, “undeveloped lots between housing estates should be used”). They were also concerned with their neighbours who had unlawfully annexed parts of pathways between the terrace houses which dominate in the Estate. The Estate is located on the periphery of the City and the second most frequently mentioned problem was public transport. Residents wanted bus routes to go into the Estate, not just around it, to link the

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<sup>413</sup> In the city’s inner zone (Św. Łazarz Estate) the situation is different as some municipal leisure facilities are already there.

Estate with different parts of Poznań, not just the centre, and to run more frequently. They complained about traffic jams on Bukowska Street which links the airport with the city centre. Respondents were equally highly concerned with littering the neighbouring Marceliński Forest and the Estate itself (e.g. garbage recycling, illegal garbage disposal, burning the garbage with open fires). Like respondents from Św. Łazarz Estate, they offered some solutions e.g. mounting trash bins, and mentioned the issue of personal security. However, respondents from Ławica Estate were mostly concerned with improving the safety of pedestrians by setting lower speed limits (e.g. “drivers go too fast”, “‘sleeping policemen’ are needed on Tuwima Street”, “young drivers are dangerous”, “cars should not exceed 20 km/h”). Ławica Estate respondents complained about the high number of cars parked on narrow pavements (e.g. “a person cannot walk on the pavement”, “no parking zones whatsoever”) and about insufficient lighting of streets and pavements (e.g. “poor lighting of Estate roads”, “no lights along the path across the unused field”)<sup>414</sup>, and about “the lack of benches in the Estate and in the Forest”. In general, they voiced concerns that may be common among people living in suburban residential areas anywhere.

Different issues are priorities for different people, however, the answers given point again to the different characteristics of these Estates. Some problems were ‘local’ and thus different in the two Estates. Two groups of common complaints referred to safety and transport issues. Another interesting observation is that my respondents’ were equally concerned with technical infrastructure and conduct or needs of local residents. Also a number of their concerns were not ‘basic’, i.e. the majority of the respondents were most concerned with aesthetics, cleanliness included, and the lack of or poor quality leisure and sport centres and playgrounds, i.e. they wanted a better quality of life. The new needs of residents clearly point to an improvement in the living standards and wellbeing of residents and their communities. If the present level of Estate residents’ cohesion is measured with their dealings with local authorities, councillors included, it is low. This reflects residents’ passivity. But equally it may reflect that their basic needs have been satisfied already as Estate communities have already achieved much acting together as civil society organisations.

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<sup>414</sup> In 2009 the lighting of the streets improved much and roadworks started to widen Bukowska Street with two additional lines.

Residents' associations are civil society organisations born in response to community needs. I would claim they are also born in response to inefficiency of the City administration (*cf.* section 6.2). Public administration is judged to be inefficient as long as it does not effectively deal with the concerns of citizens. In Poland the scale of investments in technical infrastructure after 1989 has been huge as under communism many standard services were poor or not provided. The scale of the needs of expenditure needed contribute to the perception of public administration as inefficient and ineffective. Another important issue which needs to be considered in the context of civil society activities is the source and volume of the funds needed. Sponsorship of local activities is not popular with business entities. According to EU data on the 'Human resources' initiatives co-financed by the European Social Fund<sup>415</sup>, Polish initiatives are largely co-financed with public money. In this situation, citizens tend to invest their private money in projects that improve their living standards and are executed quickly. Examples given in this chapter speak for residents' understanding of the complexity of the situation. Residents' investments in basic technical infrastructure have been born out of their dissatisfaction and frustration. Journalist Przybylska complained that:

What is lacking is citizens' involvement in initiatives of happy people. (Journalist Przybylska, Interview 2007)

New local civil society organisations in Poznań Estates are recognising or inventing new needs of local communities. There are 'happy people' in Poland, to refer to the last quote, and they are eager to work for *publico bono*. Their new objectives include increasing social cohesion with leisure activities. For example in 2007 the Association of Ławica Estate Friends' organised its first 'family rally' for local residents. The objective was to make the participants more interested in the Wielkopolska region and to have fun together.

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<sup>415</sup> European Commission, European Social Fund, 'ESF spending by country', [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/discover/spending\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/discover/spending_en.htm), accessed 25.05.2009 and European Commission, European Social Fund, 'ESF in Poland 2007-2013', [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/members/pl\\_en.htm#](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/members/pl_en.htm#), accessed 25.05.2009.

## 6.6. Reforming the Estates

The Estate is a blend of a civil society organisation and an accessory unit of local government. This follows from my analyses performed so far. The role of Estate Councils is dual. They are legislative bodies of self-governing Estates and advise the City Council<sup>416</sup>. Their executive power is limited as the execution of Estate Councils' initiatives is in the hands of the City Hall (which may make Estate Councillors responsible for executing some investments).

While opting for community-based Estates, Poznań City Council delegated some of its responsibilities and money to Estate Councils, rightly assuming that local residents know better what their communities need and that some Estate problems can be solved locally with part of the City budget dedicated to Estate Councils. In 2007, when I conducted my interviews, there were 68 Estates and a local debate about reforming their system started on the initiative of Mayor Grobelny. In this section I follow some arguments used in the debate on a possible reform of the Poznań Estates concerning the division of competences and labour and a possible change in the size and number of Estates. The sensitive issue is the balance between administration growth and the performance of civil society.

Mayor Grobelny, the author of the idea of the reform was very critical about the present role and activities of Estates:

[...] the activities of Estate Councils should not be limited to community festivities. The original idea was one of subsidiarity and some responsibilities and competences were passed to accessory units. Lower level accessory units were to act as the link between communities and Poznań's local government. Today the link is not there. Even within Estates information does not flow. We [City Hall] do not receive information from local residents via Estate Councils because the scale of information aggregation is too big. The only solution is to pass more competences to a lower level. Then accessory units will be responsible for a bench in the park. I am not able to take care of a bench. I am concerned with whether there will be 5,000 benches in Poznań or not. (Mayor Grobelny, Interview 2007)

Mayor Grobelny's negative evaluation of Estate Councils' work was at least partly unjustified as examples in this chapter demonstrate. His comments about 'a bench' confirm Sadowski's (Barka Foundation) observation that the City Hall and the Mayor "are interested in huge projects only" (Sadowski, Barka Foundation, Interview 2007). 'A bench'

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<sup>416</sup> Poznań City Charter (*op. cit.*), Article 42, item 2: "In matters of concern for a given Estate as regards tasks of public utility within the meaning of the Act, it shall be obligatory for authorities and organisational units of the City to obtain the Estate opinion."

attitude was also confirmed by journalist Przybylska (Interview 2007) who spoke about the City Hall delegating some of its tasks which the City administration considers “a burden” to NGOs (*cf.* chapter 6, section 6.2). Mayor Grobelny’s perception of Estates as accessory units appears to be that Estate Councils should ‘support’ the City Hall in the field whereas they are to support the City Council. It also appears that “the scale of information aggregation” translates into the mass of information to which the City Hall should respond and the response means action. As the City Hall ranks and files the information it receives from Estate Councils, various NGOs, ‘common’ associations included, and from individual residents, some matters which concern Estate communities are judged to be of ‘lesser’ urgency or importance or impossible to be dealt with immediately. Requests pile up. Mayor Grobelny wanted the Estate Councils to have more executive power which would reduce the workload of City Hall officials. The workload Mayor Grobelny complained about is huge. The City has to deal with:

[...] plenty of tasks that were neglected for 50 years, like urban planning order, investments in roads, some infrastructure problems. (City Councillor Kręglewski, Interview 2007)

The needs of Posnanians are changing but not decreasing in number. Estate-born initiatives are numerous. This is confirmed by the introduction of the Department Supporting the City Accessory Units to the City administration structure (*cf.* chapter 6, section 6.2 and chapter 1, Figure 1.5) to increase the efficiency of the City Hall by reducing the workload of other departments. Tomczak MP (Interview 2007), like Mayor Grobelny, saw a need to “reduce the workload of the City Hall” by reforming the system of Estates.

While speaking about a possible reform, Councillors did not openly criticise the efficiency or effectiveness of the City Hall (section 6.4). Instead they spoke about improving decision-making processes for example:

The delegation of competences to the lower Estate level may ease decision-making processes once some decisions will be taken at this lower level. (City Councillor Ganowicz, Interview 2007)

However, their concern with decision-making processes was linked with their concerns about Estate investment potential and dealings with the City Hall discussed in subsection 6.4.1. They had reservations about the efficiency of the City Hall. They claimed that with more competences and more money, they would act more effectively and faster. A major issue for Estate Councillors was the visibility of their work. If their effectiveness appears

to be limited, it is primarily because they are dependant on the performance of the city administration (City Hall), the City investment plans and the City budget. The frames of operation of Estate Councils also limit their activities.

What hinders Estate Councils' performance are not only their limited independence and financial means (*cf.* chapter 6, subsection 6.3.1) but also the administrative workload. The workload has been increased with the Act on Public Procurement of 29 January 2004<sup>417</sup> and the Act on Public Finance<sup>418</sup> of 2005 (*cf.* chapter 3, section 3.4), the aim of which was to limit possible fraudulent use of public money. Several Estate councillors pointed to the troublesome paper work (bureaucracy) introduced with the Acts which discourages Estate Councillors from work. For example:

The Act on Public Procurement is by and large judged to have caused more harm than good. If one is determined to corrupt others, the Act cannot stop him or her. Budgets are fixed and we try our best to spend the money reasonably. In the case of services, frequently it has turned out that obeying the Act, we pay more for them than necessary. [...] Complicated procedures have discouraged many councillors. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

[...] provisions of the Act on Public Finance are the roots of some difficulties. [...] Residents of Poznań who are Estate Councillors complain, partly rightly, that some procedures are too bureaucratic [...] Estate Councillors are volunteers and overloading them with paper work is not good. (City Councillor and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski, Interview 2007)

In that context they saw a need to remunerate Estate Councillors for their work.

The present situation is that the councillors of Św. Łazarz Estate are all volunteers and they are not paid any allowances. If they have more competences and more responsibility for local affairs, it is likely that they will give up or choose a career in local government. The question is what allowances or payment they shall be entitled to. City Councillors receive allowances. Should Estate Councillors receive allowances or be entitled to other forms of compensation for their work? If they should not, what solutions will the authorities of Poznań offer if the competences of Estate Councils are increased? (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of Board of Św. Łazarz Estate Council, Interview 2007)

Estate Councillors quoted above and in section 6.4 complained about the workload. They, however, complained mainly about the amount of paper work and time consuming

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<sup>417</sup> Amended text of the Act on Public Procurement (*op. cit.*).

<sup>418</sup> Act on Public Finance dated 30 June 2005, Journal of Laws, 2005, No. 249, Item 2104. Date of abolition: 01.01.2010. See as well: *Główny Urząd Statystyczny* (GUS) [Central Statistical Office], 'chapter XX, Public Finance. General Notes', [http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbr/warsz/ASSETS\\_08w\\_20\\_00.pdf](http://www.stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbr/warsz/ASSETS_08w_20_00.pdf), accessed 27.09.2009.

dealings with the City Hall Departments. Councillors Ganowicz and Chudobiecki emphasised the need to secure Estate Councils' stable situation suggesting that increasing the competences and financial means of the councils would improve their functioning as Estate Councillors would feel that they can make a difference.

Estates' efficiency was questioned on the grounds of Estate Council election turnouts. City Councillor Ganowicz and City and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki mentioned low turnout figures in the Estate Council elections (see also chapter 5, subsection 5.3.4), for example:

Estates are a really good idea, however, the problem is that the interest of local communities in Estate Councils and their activities is very small and it happens that only 2 to 3% of local residents cast their votes in Estate Council elections. Such a low turnout is appalling. It is fair to say that the turnout is higher if something needs to be done in the Estate and local residents are aware that it is their activity that counts; that the involvement of their representatives can change living standards for the better. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

Low turnouts may be partly due to the different times at which they are held in various Estates, i.e. 4 years after the first council of a particular Estate was elected (*cf.* chapter 5, subsection 5.3.4). There were proposals to designate one date for elections to all Poznań Estates to improve turnouts as such a solution would produce more publicity about the elections. In 2009 the City Council decided<sup>419</sup> that from 2011 elections to all Estate Councils will be held on the same day in March.

In the 1990s local communities were given a free hand to establish Estates and in the 2007 discussions on their reform, the size of an Estate's territory and population were fiercely debated. Mayor Grobelny argued for the number of Estates to be reduced to 19. His argument was based on analyses of the population size of the best performing Polish *gminas*.

The analyses we have commissioned demonstrate that economic activities and social cohesion considered, *gminas* with populations of 30,000 perform best. The results were that such *gminas* perform best in the areas of education, transport and safety. [...] In our analyses of Poznań Estates we have assumed that a new division should

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<sup>419</sup> Poznań City Council's Act on shortening or extending the term of office of Estate Councils and establishing one date of their elections, dated 17 November 2009, No. LXIII/884/V/2009, *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/osiedla/pages.html?id=13569&instance=1017&parent=0&lang=pl>, accessed 11.08.2010.



not destroy what has already been achieved, i.e. social cohesion of communities. [...] We have considered areas of election wards, parishes and the network of schools. Finally, on paper, we have divided Poznań into 'mini *gminas*'. In theory there could be 19 Estates with each a population of 30,000. We think the number can be reduced further to 17 as some Estates could well be bigger. (Kołodziejczak, Secretary of the City Council, Interview 2007)

Grobelny's and Kołodziejczak's reference to the size of well performing *gminas* may be relevant. In Poznań there are 22 Estates with population of 3,000-4,000. There are also much smaller (Zagroda Estate is the smallest: 477 residents) and much bigger Estates (Piątkowo Zachód Estate is the biggest: 36,216 residents in 2010) (*cf.* chapter 2, subsection 2.3.2). However, comparing Estates with *gminas* is misleading. Estates are not juristic persons and their Councils support the City Council not the City Hall. It appears that Mayor Grobelny would prefer Estates to execute *gmina* tasks which are huge<sup>420</sup> (see chapter 3, section 3.3). This implies transforming Estate Councils to executive branches of the City Hall.

Different councillors had different opinions about the size of a medium size Estate, for example:

A medium size Estate is populated by 14,000-16,000 inhabitants like my Winiary Estate. I think that a redesigning of Estates to medium size ones may be a good solution. They would not be too big. [...] Another thing is the Estate territory which should not be too large. But one has to give a thought to large and sparsely inhabited territories and small and densely populated areas. (City Councillor and Winiary Estate Councillor Chudobiecki, Interview 2007)

The redesignation of the Estates was strongly opposed by some:

Warszawskie Estate may have needs and objectives similar to residents of Komadoria and Śródka Estates but I cannot imagine my Estate being one with Szczepankowo Estate. And Szczepankowo Estate would have to be incorporated into a new larger Estate for the new Estate to have the right size. The enlargement of the size of Estates with a reduction in their number would mean a takeover of Estate Councils by the City administration. That is if the competences and responsibilities of Estate Councils will be the same as those of the City Hall, then Estate Councillors will be replaced with or become administrative officials accountable to the Mayor of Poznań. Estates will face a much bigger problem than they do now. Their democratic formula will be replaced with bureaucratic dependencies. There will be elections to

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<sup>420</sup> *Gmina*'s tasks include decisions over such issues as land use, physical planning and environmental protection; public infrastructure such as water supply, sewage, public transportation, gas, electricity and heating services; public social services such as primary education, health care services, social support as well as culture, sport and leisure facilities; maintenance of streets, sewages, markets, cemeteries, green and other public spaces; management of municipal housing, administrative buildings and public facilities, maintaining public order and safety.

Estate Councils but the Council's Chairperson and Board will get salaries from the Mayor for their full time jobs as they do in Kraków<sup>421</sup>. In that situation one may be afraid to tell the Mayor that a pavement was unsatisfactorily laid because the Mayor will be his or her boss. (Grześ, City and Warszawskie Estate Councillor, Interview 2007)

Grześ defended the present system of Estates saying that merging Estates into bigger units would mean shifting away from the idea of Estates being manifestations of civil society and would change the function of Estate Councils from self-governments to that of the City administration (executive power).

I am against increasing the tasks of Estate Councils. Estates should not be responsible for schools like *gminas* are. However, I am for increasing their competences. I wish they had more impact on for example local development plans, on issuing construction permits that may be detrimental to environment. (City Councillor and Warszawskie Estate Councillor Grześ, Interview 2007)

Pucher, Deputy Chairman of the Św. Łazarz Estate Council Board noticed that if the reform takes shape:

[...] The City authorities will focus less on issues reported by small communities or individual citizens. (Pucher, Deputy Chairman of the Św. Łazarz Estate Council Board, Interview 2007)

and that the competences of Estates would have to be much wider. According to Councillor Bielerzewski changes in Estates' size and competences may increase their efficiency as the changes would have an impact on the Estates' financial resources.

Since some time has passed, now it appears that the old formula of Estate Councils has to be revised. The existing Estates differ too much among themselves. [...] it is difficult to follow the same principles of financing all Estate Councils and to give them the same competences. (City Councillor and Antoninek- Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Councillor Bielerzewski, Interview 2007)

At the time of my research there was no consensus on 'the medium' size of Estates in Poznań, however, all interviewees agreed that an Estate's population size influences the Estate's investment capacity (capitation).

Redesigning an Estate territory so as to increase its population may also be against Article 37, item 4 and 5 of the Poznań City Charter:

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<sup>421</sup> Kraków has been divided from the top into 'districts'.

4. The Estate area shall be coherent both in territorial and functional terms, as well as historical, where possible.

5. Any and all decisions concerning the integration, change of boundaries or division of Estates shall be taken by the Council upon motion by the residents or legislative authorities of Estates affected by such decisions.

(Here 'the Council' means the City Council.) Item 7 of Article 37 reads:

7. The procedure to be employed in case of establishing, integrating, dividing, changing boundaries or abolishing Estates shall be determined by the Council in a separate resolution.

The procedure has been described in chapter 5, subsection 5.1.1. In short, all changes in the boundaries of Estates must be approved by local communities. It should be noted that the identity of Estates has already been strengthened with Estate communities' self-identification and been conducive to strengthening social cohesion.

Discussions among councillors centred on the issue of de-concentration of competences, i.e. on further devolution:

Through Estate Councils the City [*gmina*] authorities may implement their policies at this lowest level by passing money and competences to Estate Councils. [...] we are debating how to enliven Estate Councils and what competences should be passed to them. (City Councillor and Żegrze Estate Councillor Wiśniewski, Interview 2007)

The debate on passing some responsibilities (competences and tasks<sup>422</sup>) from the City level to Estates has been intense. City Councillor Szczuciński said that the Estate Councillors are for a further devolution. They wish:

Estate Councils could take more decisions but City Councillors have reservations about passing their competences down. (Councillor Szczuciński, Interview 2007)

Other councillors have argued that Estates might even be responsible for parts of the public education system at the *gmina* level, i.e. kindergartens, primary and junior secondary schools located in Estates. Others, like City and Świerczewo Estate Councillor Nowicka quoted below, were careful about the extensive delegation of responsibilities to the Estates.

Delegation of tasks to accessory units [Estates] should be preceded with analyses of their size and their system within the city. It is hard to imagine that the Council of an Estate with population of 500 or 2,000 will be able to take responsibility for

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<sup>422</sup> cf. \_\_\_\_ (2007) '*Jednostki Pomocnicze Miasta (Osiedla). Funkcjonowanie w nowym układzie przestrzennym i kompetencyjnym*' [Accessory Units of the City of Poznań (Estates). Functioning in the new spatial and competence arrangements], City Hall of Poznań.

kindergartens, schools or road repairs. (City Councillor and Świerczewo Estate Councillor Nowicka, Interview 2007)

Sadowski from the Barka Foundation suggested a solution based on his experience with the Equal Programme<sup>423</sup>. He was of the opinion that the reform of Estates should primarily dedicate more money to Estate Councils. With an increased budget the Estate could employ a person responsible for monitoring local initiatives. As:

Accessory self-government units must be able to support local civil society groups and organisations [competences] and have financial resources to enhance local activities in particular when opportunities for new cooperation patterns arise. (Sadowski, Barka Foundation, Interview 2007)

Sadowski concentrated on increasing Estate competences and budgets that would facilitate tighter cooperation of their Councils with NGOs.

Poznań's experiment with Estate Councils is a telling example of the view that civil society is a process. The debate on reforming the Estates has been born out of the dissatisfaction with their performance as accessory units of the city administration. The City administrators (City Hall and the Mayor) are eager to delegate more of their tasks to Estate Councils. It appears that activities of civil society are perceived by some of the political elite as a burden to the City Hall. The mayor's solution is an easy one: Estate Councils should take over some responsibilities of the City Hall. If they do, Estates may well become pseudo-*gminas* in the administrative sense. The sensitive issue is a balance between administration growth and the performance civil society, i.e. the Councils of community-based Estates. However, Estate Councils are not part of the administration but of local legislative self-government. It is the City Council that recognises the effectiveness of Estate Councils and strives to increase their efficiency. It is also the City Council that appreciates the work of Estate Councillors. The main issues brought up by Councillors in the context of a possible reform were current limitations on Estate Councils' performance and visibility.

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<sup>423</sup> The programme is financed by the EU Social Fund. ESF is one of the structural funds. The Barka Foundation focuses on social inclusion projects (social economy projects) that are part of the Operational Programme called Human Capital. Some of their new projects involve groups (not Estates) in Śródka and Piątkowo Estates. ESF applicants stand a better chance of winning grants if they are officially recognised as partners by local authorities. Poland according to the European Commission has been the winner of ESF subsidies (9.7 billion Euro) in the EU. See European Commission, European Social Fund, 'ESF spending by country', [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/discover/spending\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/discover/spending_en.htm), accessed 25.05.2009 and European Commission, European Social Fund, 'ESF in Poland 2007-2013', [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/esf/members/pl\\_en.htm#](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/members/pl_en.htm#), accessed 25.05.2009.

In February 2009 the City Councils decided to appoint its standing commission for the reform of Estates. In February 2010 the commission presented its draft project of the reform.<sup>424</sup> Estates were to have the minimum population between 1,000 (peripheral zone) to 15,000 (densely populated areas). The project was consulted with residents (August 2010) and the numbers of Estates has been reduced to 42.

## 6.7. Conclusions

As civil society is expected to be structured and is associated with citizen-based organisations, the issue of social cohesion, i.e. whether and how social life is voluntarily 'organised' in Poznań emerged to be essential to diagnosing the condition of Poznań's civil society. The local authorities of Poznań recognise communities and neighbourhoods as forms of civil society, despite their low level of formality, in addition to an organisation [*organizacja*] or institution [*instytucja*]<sup>425</sup>. The involvement of civil society members in the implementation of their initiatives is huge and some members actually supervise the execution of investment projects. Residents credit some investments in public utilities from their own pockets. The City Council adheres to its philosophy that those who recognise a need should take the initiative and responsibility.

The space and support for civil society organisations have been secured with the first parliamentary Acts passed after 1989 and strengthened with the Act on Public Benefit and Voluntary Work which was an initiative of Polish civil society (organisations). Civil society is consulted on various matters. In Poznań the frames of collaboration are laid down in the Charter on Collaboration of the City of Poznań with Non-Governmental Organisations [*Karta Współpracy Miasta Poznania z Organizacjami Pozarządowymi*] from 2006. Every year an annual programme of cooperation is designed. It includes grant and project competitions, conferences and other forms of collaboration in various areas. In the City Hall there are three bodies which support civil society organisations: a special Department, a plenipotentiary for NGOs and the City Advisory Board for Public Benefit Activities. While analysing various registries of civil society organisations in Poland, I came to the conclusion that the data in the registries is incoherent and highly unreliable.

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<sup>424</sup> *Miejski Informator Multimedialny*, [Multimedia City Guide], 'Projekt reformy jednostek pomocniczych Miasta Poznania' [Reform project of accessory units of the City of Poznań], <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/osiedla/pages.html?id=15248&ch=15249&p=17123&instance=1017&lang=pl&lhs=osiedla&rhs=publications>, accessed 25.10.2010.

<sup>425</sup> In Polish 'organisation' and 'institution' imply a high level of formality (structure, statutes, formal registration).

Differences can be attributed to the different criteria used and the regularity with which the registries are updated. After I completed my research, I found other data on Poznań based organisations published by the City Hall. This data is based on REGON<sup>426</sup> and the National Court Registry<sup>427</sup>. The numbers given by the two institutions were surprisingly high: REGON - 2,357 in 2007 and 2,481 in 2008, Court registries - 1,397 in 2007 and 1,543 in 2008<sup>428</sup>. In 2008 in addition to organisations that qualify as NGOs according to Polish law there were 392 'common' associations<sup>429</sup>. In November 2009 in the City of Poznań database of non-governmental organisations there were 584 NGOs including 34 public benefit organisations<sup>430</sup>.

The differences cast doubt on any research on the condition of civil society in Poland done so far (see also the data given in chapter 2, for example Koln/Jawor data). The data in all of these registries demonstrates, however, that the number of various civil society organisations keeps growing. In my opinion the data from the City Hall registries is the most interesting as organisations registered in the City Hall are ones which wish to be recognised by the City authorities as partners.

The situation of NGOs has been very dynamic and they are already relatively strong. In Poznań the City Council supports civil society activities with grants. Civil society organisations may also run in other grant competitions, EU grant competitions included. The point is that partnership is needed to carry out community-based projects. Poznań grant competition procedures are transparent. The introduction of the Act on Public Benefit and Voluntary Work and the emergence of associations that try to support Poznań's Estates are examples of the strength of Polish civil society. Thus Polish democracy keeps learning

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<sup>426</sup> National Official Business Register, cf. chapter 2, subsection 2.2.2. The data was given by the Polish Statistical Office.

<sup>427</sup> This data was given by the national Central Information Unit at the Ministry of Justice.

<sup>428</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2009) '*Sprawozdanie z realizacji Rocznej Programu Współpracy Miasta Poznania z Organizacjami Pozarządowymi na 2008 rok*' [Report on the realisation of the Annual Programme of Co-operation between the City of Poznań and Non-Governmental Organisations in 2008] City Hall of Poznań, Health Care Provision and Social Care Department, Miejski Informator Multimedialny, [Multimedia City Guide],

<http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/ngo/pages.html?co=list&id=16057&ch=16060&instance=1017&lang=pl&lhs=ngo>, accessed 12.12.2009.

<sup>429</sup> \_\_\_\_ (2008) '*Rejestr Stowarzyszeń Zwykłych*' [The register of common associations] (*op. cit.*).

<sup>430</sup> Miejski Informator Multimedialny, [Multimedia City Guide], '*Internetowa mapa aktywności organizacji pozarządowych*' [Internet map of NGOs' activities] <http://www.poznan.pl/mim/public/ngo/pages.html?co=list&id=16057&ch=16537&instance=1017&lang=pl&lhs=ngo>, accessed 01.12.2009.

to accommodate its civil society whose experience and effectiveness keeps growing. The co-habitation of local government and NGOs keeps improving.

In Poznań there are NGOs and there are community-based Estates whose Councils are democratically elected. Political party affiliation, I would claim, is irrelevant in elections to Estate Councils. By and large residents of Poznań identify Estates with neighbourhoods, which underlines their perception as civil society organisations. Estate Councils' performance largely depends on the councils' financial means allocated from the City budget, on the number of residents in a given Estate and on the actual needs of community based Estates. The budgets of Estate Councils are judged to be small, i.e. the capitation money, and sponsorship of civil society activities is small in Poland. In the case of Estate Councils another problem is the burden of paper work which can be eased with efficient administrative support given by the City Hall. The above impedes the effectiveness of Estates and Estates' visibility. However, I would conclude that Poznań's experiment with Estate Councils is a telling example supporting the view that civil society is an ongoing process.

Elected Estate Councils are not part of the administration (executive authority) but of local self-government (legislative authority). They are advisory bodies to the City Council as they support the City Council 'in the field' and they may take on some tasks of the City administration like NGOs. Estate Councils are not self-supporting and they exist within the structures of local government. It is the Estates' legislative power (extension of the City Council's competences) and the source of their budget which clearly make them part of local government. Thus they do not meet the criteria given in some definitions of the civil society concept advocating that civil society and thus its organisations should be self-supporting and autonomous from the state. However, there are other definitions that point to the fact that civil society can be supported by the state or attached to it. Nevertheless, the fact that Estates exist within the structures of local government means that they appear to be identified more with a place rather than an institution. In the case of Estates, 'the place' translates into neighbourhood. Estate Councils are an example of representative democracy and their operations are an example of procedural democracy. However, it was observed that healthy democracy is much more than representative and procedural democracy. It should also be associative and secure space for civic initiatives, i.e. activities of civil society.

Active civil society monitors developments on the political scene and takes care of community needs, in other words, it manifests itself with its activities. Local residents' interest in Estate Council elections and activities is low for many reasons and is conditioned by the perceived effectiveness of Estate Councillors.

Poznań's City Hall, the Mayor in particular, is critical about the performance and occasional conduct of civil society. This criticism in part results from the huge numbers of issues advocated and initiatives presented by civil society organisations. At the same time the activities and performance of local government in Poznań are criticised. Criticism of authorities follows from citizens' dissatisfaction or frustration with their needs which keep changing. Today, residents' expectations about the performance of the executive authorities in Poznań are higher and civil society activities are less spontaneous, i.e. they are much more organised.

Poles are by and large disinterested in formal membership in organisations. The potential of social networking which was tested prior to 1989 and in the 1990s as well as social bonds created then have not vanished. However as a number of residents' needs have been satisfied, some civil society organisations, including some community-based Estates, have become dormant. To become active, they need to recognise new needs or concerns. Leaders of civil society who are aware of the situation concentrate on increasing social cohesion with leisure activities.

Residents' activities are interest-based or issue-oriented. The question is if indeed all activities are for *publico bono*, i.e. if all activities are civic. Whether they are or not, depends on one's perspective. From a sociological perspective some initiatives and actions may seem to be very locally oriented and the question is who will benefit from them. The democratic practice is that although the majority decides, minority objectives should be given due attention, and in Poznań they are not ignored by authorities because consultations are a must. The 'common good' issue is complicated because Poles frequently hold adverse attitudes toward the authorities, and executive authorities in particular. Residents take an interest in the City and Estate Councils' activities and projects mainly in situations in which their wellbeing is in question or being threatened. At present, if a resident or a group of citizens obstruct an initiative, their actions may be judged to be non-civic and thus negative. 'Positive' involvement can be interpreted as a successful



effort for *publico bono*. Drawing a line between negative and positive actions is difficult. It should be emphasised that successful initiatives contribute to community cohesion.

Poznań civil society organisations, Estates included, have contributed much to democratic consolidation. Their objectives and activities keep changing as some needs have been satisfied. It may be claimed that from 2004 the pace of investments has increased rapidly and the economic situation has stabilised. Since the time of my research, the main issue has become the quality of civic involvement as well as the quality of services provided by the City administration. This and the current debate on the local self-governance system in Poznań point to the level of maturity reached by Polish democracy thus far.

## 7. Conclusions – Local Government, Local Democratic Processes and Democratic Consolidation in Poland

The multiple democratic transformation of Poland from a centralised communist state to democracy began in 1989 with changes in the economy, the transformation of public institutions, a profound territorial reform and the (re)establishment of local self-government structures. Decentralisation had to address the question of scale, taking place at national and local levels of government. Reformers focused on the decentralisation of Polish local government following the idea that an essential part of the democratic transformation is to learn how to practise democracy at ‘the bottom’ where the revitalisation of associative life and a revival of active civil education were both most workable and likely. The reforms rebuilding local government were a key part of this process as they aimed at increasing the stability of a young Polish democracy through the legitimisation of new authorities and the rebirth of local democracy practiced by local government and the citizens. This ‘neo-Tocquevillean’ approach gave local communities the chance to learn to self-govern and drew on the enthusiasm of the 1989 massive involvement of Polish society in politics, and the victory of Solidarity.

The building of local democracy was an essential element of the Polish democratic consolidation. At the onset of the transformation, the new Polish democracy was highly dependant on citizens’ self-organisation in support of democratic institutions. The empowerment of local self-government at the level of the basic administrative unit, i.e. the *gmina* level, was the first significant change of the communist system. *Gminas* – their local authorities and communities – were given the right to decide on local issues. The democratic local government reforms changed the perception of local residents of their role in decision-making and their experience in using democratic tools kept growing through a learning process.

In analyses of the advancement of democratic consolidation, the relations between state, nation and democracy are essential (Linz and Stepan 1996) as they should be built on the canvas of democratic laws and order. In a consolidated, ‘healthy’ democracy the actual practises of local authorities facilitate the involvement of local residents in decision-making processes. In Poland the implemented democratic reforms affected citizens and societies which needed to learn to safeguard their democratic rights and act according to the rules of a new democratic order. The emergence of new civil societies appeared to be

essential to effective and accountable administration (*cf.* Yoder 2003). It follows that research on democratic consolidation should cover both, representative democracy and participatory democracy.

In this thesis issues related to the relationship between local government and civil society in the 20 year old Polish democracy have been investigated. The approach taken was based on the assumption that actual democratic practises can help demonstrate if democracy is becoming consolidated or not. In focus were the actual practices of local government and the involvement of local communities in the execution of power - perception of these by the different actors involved in local politics is key to understanding the operation of (local) democracy. The objective of my research on the current condition of Polish local democracy was to identify processes and developments crucial to its consolidation. As local democracy is about the use of democratic tools and relationships among local authorities, civil society organisations and local residents, exploring the above led to many questions which were narrowed down to give a substantial insight into the actual exercise of democratic practises.

To date there has been little detailed research on Polish democratic consolidation at the local level. For example Matczak (2006) has examined local communities' involvement in local affairs and Swianiewicz (2002b) has analysed local elections and local government's cooperation with NGOs but there has been no systematic analysis of the processes underpinning democratic consolidation at the local level<sup>431</sup>. This thesis helps fill the gap in understanding these processes in Poland after 1989 by investigating the functioning of local democracy focusing in particular on local self-government and its relations with civil society. This thesis addresses three trends which define democratic consolidation: 1) (re)constituting a system of local government and local democracy as means of countering political centralisation; 2) exploring local government and local democracy in practice; and 3) spreading democratic participation through public participation – the role of (local) civil society (see Table 7.1). These themes have been analysed through the case study approach taking a single relatively big municipality – a *gmina* with *poviat* status – and looking at its recent experience of democratic practices. The city of Poznań and two of its sub-local community-based Estates whose Councils are accessory to the local government of Poznań

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<sup>431</sup> Much of the research on CEE democratic consolidation and particularly the role of civil society has focused on the national level (e.g. Cox 2007, Howard 2003, Ziółkowski 2005).

were investigated. I was interested in the extent to which, in the city perceived as a leader of local government reform, democratic practices have already been introduced and exercised effectively.

Table 7.1 Trends defining democratic consolidation and research questions

Trends defining democratic consolidation	Research Questions
(Re)constituting a system of local government/democracy as means of countering political centralisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What has been the rationale for (re)creating a system of local government in Poland?</li> <li>- How has the devised system sought to ensure its democratic operation e.g. through the elections and the adoption of representative democracy?</li> <li>- How has the system sought to ensure that local government cannot be 'captured' by 'non-democratic' political groups?</li> <li>- What criteria can be derived to identify the working of local government and democracy in practice?</li> </ul>
Exploring local government and local democracy in practice	<p>Based on the experience in Poznań:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is local government/democracy perceived by political elites and voters?</li> <li>- How democratic are local (formal) political processes in the city in terms of the criteria identified?</li> </ul>
Spreading democratic participation through public participation – the role of (local) civil society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is civil society in Poland to be defined?</li> <li>- What types of civil society become involved in political processes in Poznań? Who becomes involved? Why?</li> <li>- What kinds of (neighbourhood) activities does this involve?</li> <li>- In what ways does the City authority foster local civil society?</li> <li>- What is the role of Estates Councils in Poznań as institutionalized forms of local participation? Does such participation function as part of civil society or as part of the formal structure of government?</li> <li>- How vibrant is civil society in Poznań?</li> <li>- What is its contribution to local democratic processes?</li> </ul>

In this final chapter the findings and discussion of the functioning of local government, local democracy and the role of local civil society are presented to facilitate a deeper and wider understanding of the issues surrounding democratic consolidation and local democracy. Though my research was a snapshot in space and time of one Polish city, it aimed to offer a complex and extended record of the evolution and current outcomes of democratic transformation in Poland demonstrating that relationships between local authorities and local civil society are at the core of actual democratic practices.

## 7.1. Research findings and discussion

This section is based upon the three trends which have been identified as being the defining elements of democratic consolidation and thus looks at the issues of establishing democratic local government and its implications, local government in practice and enrolling local citizens.

It should be emphasised that local government processes in Poznań and the part played by civil society demonstrate the complexities of making democracy. In terms of their contribution to democratic consolidation in some respects both had positive implications but at the same time some actors perceived changes and structures more critically. It was found that the role of conventional measures of democratic participation – voting in local elections – are, at best, ambivalent in demonstrating the importance attached to democratic participation by citizens. Democratic participation may take many forms and citizens' involvement in public affairs at the local level shifts depending on the relevance of the issue to individuals and groups. My research gives an overview of democratic consolidation in the City of Poznań in 2007 which is a result of new national legislation, the re-definition of the relationships between local authorities and local residents, and the ongoing re-organisation of civil society.

### **Establishing democratic local government and its implications**

The key prerogatives of decentralisation and democratisation are composed of a minimum of three values that are essential to local government in a democratic state: autonomy, participation and effectiveness. In Poland, democratisation started with decentralisation and the main issue in decentralisation centred on local government reforms (e.g. Kwiatkowski and Okraszewska 2002, Yoder 2003, Regulski 2003). The rationale for re-creating a system of local government in Poland after 1989 was that local government was seen as the weakest link in the authoritarian system (Kotulski 2002, Regulska 1998, Schopflin 2003) and as an antidote to the centralised state (Campbell and Coulson 2006, Blok 2006, Regulski 2003). It was part of the idea of strengthening Polish democracy that at the local level people (together) would start to take responsibility and govern their own local area, eliminating the communist order and logic from their lives by introducing changes to their own benefit.

The newly devised system sought to ensure territorial pluralism which meant that the objective was to disperse the power and to spread it between socially different decision-

making centres (Mellors and Coppethwaite 1987). The 1990 parliamentary Act on *Gmina* Local Self-Government re-introduced the *gmina*, the basic unit (NUTS 5) of territorial administrative division. There are almost 2500 of them. The re-establishment of local self-government on the *gmina* level was a priority supported by Solidarity's programmatic idea of a self-governing society, which had to be built bottom-up. The reform of voivodships (NUTS 2) and the introduction of the poviats level (NUTS 4) took place almost 10 years later. The introduction of the poviats level affected municipalities (65 in number with a population over 100,000) which since then have a combined status of *gmina* and poviats. This combined status refers primarily to responsibilities passed down from the central government to local government in the relatively large municipalities. The combined status was disputed and settled only in 2000 when the Constitutional Tribunal decided that in terms of autonomy large municipalities must be treated as *gminas* (Dolnicki 2009:125).

The autonomy of the *gmina* self-government was defined in and safeguarded with the *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act of 1990 and confirmed in the Constitution (1997). Decentralisation is understood as a process whereby governmental functions are shifted downward within the hierarchical system of state bureaucracy. In essence in Poland local government was not derived from the central government (top-bottom, 19<sup>th</sup> Century 'classical' approach and current pattern of allocation of subsidies) as *gminas* are communities and their existence as a political form of local community is primary (e.g. Blok 2006, Dolnicki 2006, 2009). Poland is a unitary decentralised state. It is based on the principle of subsidiarity which refers to the devolution of power (Dolnicki 2006, Wójcik 1999). This means the state is subsidiary to all institutions and organisations active in the state territory and serving its citizens. In the Polish system, local government is not state administration. Its independence is regulated by national law which limits both the autonomy of local government, i.e. its competencies (Dolnicki 2009) and the competencies of central government. The autonomy of Polish local government is part of the system based on the rule of law. Polish local government was designed to be an emanation of local community ('natural' approach) and to perform public administration tasks in defined domains and scope (Dolnicki 2009, Nowacka 2010). In accordance with Polish law it may pass local laws on matters not reserved to other levels of government without consulting any other government. Should the legality of a local act be questioned, the case may be brought to court by any party (e.g. the state, the citizen, etc.) The autonomy of Polish local government should be understood as an instrument for the realisation of communal interests and freedom to take actions in order to solve communal problems (Kjellberg

1995), i.e. it is functional (Blok 2006). Local Council is the legislative body of Polish local government. The executive body of local government is the directly (since 2002) elected mayor and the mayor's office, i.e. the City Hall administration. It needs to be noted that the 1990 Act on Self-Government Employees established local government employees (administration) distinct from the central administration.

In Poland the devised system aimed at ensuring the democratic operation of local government through the free elections of local councillors i.e. the adaptation of representative democracy (*cf.* Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi 2008). Democratic elections are a method of democratic legitimation of authorities. Elections to local councils in *gminas* with a population over 20,000 are proportional with 5% threshold and the d'Hondt method is used to attribute the number of council seats. The number of councillors is determined in the 1990 Act. It depends on the population of the *gmina* and cannot exceed 45. In Poznań there are 37 councillors. They are elected for a term of 4 years. The political arena is polarised. There are four national political parties (*PO*, *PiS*, *SLD* and *PSL*). Results of elections to local government demonstrate that there is also space for local groups and independent councillors (not affiliated to political parties). In Poland turnouts in the local government elections between 1990 and 2006 never reached level of 50%. Interest in local elections is lower than in national elections and the accountability issue is relevant to assessing the role of local government.

The 2002 reform of local government introduced direct elections of mayors. The aim of this reform was to strengthen the political leadership of the mayor and to enhance political stability in municipalities where before this reform the Mayor could be removed from office through a vote of non-confidence approved by a simple majority of the Council. The 2002 reform passed competencies of the Board of the City Council to the directly elected mayor. In effect the reform strengthened the position of the mayor to the extent that a strong mayor can have a disproportionate influence in local politics.

Functional arguments for decentralisation include local government's responsiveness and efficiency/effectiveness (*cf.* e.g. Kotulski 2002:47 and Swianiewicz 2001a). The issue of the degree of autonomy local government should enjoy combines with fiscal decentralisation (Peteri 2003, Stanek 2003, Ahmad, Brosio, and Tanzi 2008, Blok 2006). In 1990 the *gmina* took over a major part of state property and was granted the status of the juristic person (Regulski 1999, 2003, Kowalczyk 2000). *Gminas* began the process of

freeing the economy by privatising enterprises, selling, transferring or leasing land and buildings. They may take bank loans and are partners to investors. The budget of the City of Poznań is used as a policy and management tool. One third of the budget is generated by real estate tax, property revenues and other own revenues. An important observation is that the subsidies from central government are shares in revenues collected within a local territorial unit from central income taxes and grants' transfers. Cases where 'specific' grants (*dotacja*) are not awarded tend to be viewed by local authorities as a 'punishment'. The criteria for their allocation are neither stable nor clear (Bury and Swianiewicz 2003).

Local government should be responsive to the concerns of citizens and able to find solutions acceptable to them. In Poland measures to safeguard participatory democracy were introduced in the 1990 *Gmina* Local Self-Government Act. They include not only free elections but also social consultations and referenda (*cf.* Dolnicki 2006 and 2009, Piasecki 2005, Mausch-Dębowska forthcoming 2011). Some consultations are obligatory for example on spatial development plans. In Poznań no local referendum was held.

The positioning of local government in the Polish system of governance and its practices has made it a counterweight to the authoritarian state. As one of the main authors of the Polish decentralisation reforms - Kulesza - rightly stated:

The most favourable moment during which the central bureaucracy (which is usually defending its position) is weak enough to allow any substantial changes is usually very short. The question of time is crucial. If the reformers are not ready to present their concepts and their particulars exactly when it is needed and possible (from the viewpoint of the political situation), then a proper time is probably over [...] The main factor guaranteeing success is maintaining the fast pace of work. (Kulesza 2002:204-205)

### **Local government in practice**

This research derived criteria to investigate the working of local government and the environment of local democracy and itemised them as attributes of 'a healthy democracy', i.e. representativeness, accountability, effectiveness and responsiveness (e.g. Sharpe 1970, Kjellberg 1995, Swianiewicz 2001a, Mellors and Coppethwaite 1987). Local governments are the level of government with which citizens have the most contact. Thus they are viewed as critical to the evolution of a democratic state. Furthermore for a democracy to be healthy, the actual practices of local authorities should facilitate increasing involvement of local residents in decision-making processes.



In Poland it has been assumed that the corporate approach to local self-government - in which effectiveness and efficiency are highly valued - is decisive for the quality of life of local residents and standards of communal and societal services delivery (*cf.* Kotulski 2002, Swianiewicz 2001a). In densely populated urban areas like Poznań the improvement of living standards and quality of services is a major concern of local government (*cf.* Sharpe 1970). Activities of local government in Poland in the 1990s concentrated on upgrading technical infrastructure as its standards and thus standards of services were appalling (Bondyra 2005). This troublesome heritage of the communist system was largely reduced with the joint efforts of the authorities and civil society organisations including Poznań's community-based Estates.

Residents can control authorities (*cf.* Diamond 1994). One means of that control is exercised on the occasion of elections at which authorities' accountability is evaluated (*cf.* Soós 2001, Devas and Delay 2006, John 2001, Bennett 1997). Accountability usually refers to citizens' support for local authorities. Choices residents make while electing their national and regional representatives as well as local self-governments in Poland depend largely on electors' evaluation of the performance and potential of candidates known to electors. My investigation of the perception of the effectiveness of the City Council as the local legislative body indicates that residents control what local government does and intervene if it does not act as desired. My questionnaire research demonstrated that local residents are moderately content with the effectiveness of the Mayor and the City Council.

Low electoral turnouts are assumed to be indicative of weak democracy in CEE countries. In Poland the interest of electors in local Council elections is on average 5% lower than in national parliamentary elections. Turnouts are highest in gminas with populations below 20,000 and lowest in cities with urban powiat status (Zarycki 1999b:48). It was found that the average for 7 biggest cities in local government (Council) elections was 39.8%. In Poznań the average turnout was 42.8%, i.e. above the average for big cities. Higher turnouts are recorded locally in mayoral elections where voters are keen to ensure their preferred candidate is successful. In Poznań voters' political preferences in national and local Council elections are stable even though in Poland the national political arena is still not comparable to countries in which there are traditional established political parties. In this context in local elections knowing the candidates plays an important role.

The Council's visibility is a vital concern of the City councillors in Poznań. The visibility issue is important in the context of elections. City councillors' visibility is low and in sharp contrast to the visibility of the Mayor whose leadership has been institutionalised in 2002. Mayor Grobelny is a high profile mayor frequently appearing in the local media and dominating the City Council. Citizens are much more likely to know the name of the Mayor compared to those of the City councillors other than serving the area in which they live.

Accountability is a priority for elected authorities. My interview research demonstrated that elected authorities (Council and Mayor) are aware they must be accountable to the community. The re-election of active City councillors demonstrated that in Poznań the local elite has been accountable. The importance of the accountability issue is also reflected in the positive attitude to establishing single-seat constituencies. This support for single-seat constituencies in Poznań can be interpreted as both threatening the proportional system and opting for increased accountability of the elected.

Compared with the communist period, relations between the City authorities and citizens improved noticeably. Local authorities have been opening up to the citizens and City Hall officials try to adhere to new communication standards. The recognition of the partnership quality issue in communication is an outcome of a major attitude change on the part of local administration. The trend is a positive sign of the embedding of local democracy as comprehensive and reciprocal communication is conducive to the wider participation of residents in decision making processes. My analysis of the local government in Poznań strongly indicates that it sees its role in improving residents' access to local administration and provision of effective service delivery.

Local authorities of Poznań have difficulties accepting strong criticism. This applies mostly to the executive authorities and shows in their attitudes to local consultations. Consulting the public was questioned on the grounds of low attendance and membership not representative of the community. At the same time it was recognised that consultations ease the process of decision taking. The number and frequency of consultations keep growing and this speaks for the local authorities' recognition of the importance of listening to the public.

City councillors of Poznań are much less visible than the Mayor but the Council is sufficiently robust to exercise its legislative authority and has used to rein in the Mayor on

occasions. The situation has been dynamic. At times relationships have been cooperative, at others more cohabitational, while since 2007 the Council has been exercising its power with more determination. Examples are the councillors' involvement in public consultations, growing allocation of money to NGO grant competitions and recent decisions on the reform of Poznań Estates (on Estates see below).

Another major change is that of the perception of issues raised by local residents. Councillors deal mostly with individual residents' complaints. Interests advocated by residents were treated as private. A major change is that some of those interests are being recognised as public.

A basic premise of the thesis has been that the composition and operations of local government can reflect, to a large extent, the strength of local representative democracy. Therefore, I argued that the condition of local democracy gives essential insight into the process of enrooting democratic practices. My analyses of the residents' responses to questions on the condition of Polish democracy and local democracy in Poznań have interesting implications like the relevance of the size of an administrative unit to the interpretation of data obtained from small and large population units e.g. the connectedness of authorities and citizens. Another interesting implication, to mention but one more, is the factor of the education level of an individual and its relevance to opinions held and decisions taken. Differences in the affluence of residents also matter. Finally the different character of spatial functions prevailing in the sub-city units has an effect on the ways of communication between the residents of those units and city authorities.

I have reviewed Polish national and local laws and regulations to position the Polish local *gmina* government within the new Polish democracy and concluded that the position of local government has been stable and its role growing. Activities of the local government of Poznań are symptomatic of the authorities' recognition of the need to be responsive, effective and accountable. Local democracy in Poznań has been found to be inclusive and its practices accessible to all interested citizens. The learning process has reached the stage at which the democratic system improves itself. This is another strong indicator of a healthy mature democracy.

## Enrolling local citizens

While reviewing the literature on civil society it was found that there is a problem of lack of sharpness of the definition of civil society (e.g. Audier 2006, Cohen and Arato 1992, Cox 2007, Diamond 1994, Foley and Edwards 1996, Howard 2002, Kubik 2005, Myant 2005, Putnam 1993, Ziółkowski 2005, etc.), i.e. it is difficult to agree what civil society is and what it is not. The first approach towards civil society is linked to the work of Tocqueville and his account of a conscious and involved citizenry able to organise itself independently of organs of power (Tocqueville [1840] 1946 and *cf.* Audier 2006, Myant 2005). The second approach concentrates on civil society's independence from institutional power structures. Polish reformers of local government opted for a 'neo-Tocquevillean' approach to embed local democracy. In the 'neo-Tocquevillean' approach civil society's organisations increase the political efficacy and democratic skills of citizens. The basic legal frameworks were provided by local government reforms.

To investigate the current condition of civil society in Poland I adopted my working definition of the term which reads:

Civil society is voluntary, self-generating and gives rise to a self-governing organised social life with the interest-based and issue-oriented actions of society members.

In essence this means that civil society is an organised form of public social life. It should have the potential to reinforce a democratic state.

Upon reviewing the literature I concluded that civil society should be viewed as a process. Civil society at the national level is in large measure, though not solely, an aggregate of the society's involvement in public affairs at the local level. This observation points to the importance of analysing local manifestations of civil society and its concern with local policies to assess the strength of Polish civil society. In my research I was working against two popular Western assumptions. One was that citizens need always be active in the social sphere to have civil society. The other one was that Polish civil society is weak. I have contrasted those two assumptions with the Kubik's (2005) line of argument that in the evaluation of the condition of civil society in CEE more emphasis should be put on the quality and not quantity of links and on connectedness between civil society and political society as even in societies where the level of participation in civil society is low, governments may be restrained and influenced, and democratic parties encouraged as a result of the 'quality' and 'connectedness' of civil society (Kubik 2005 and Cox 2007).

This analysis was complemented with Hirschman's ([1982], 2002) observations about shifting involvement in civil society organisations. I have found Hirschman's idea about societies being predisposed to oscillate between periods of intense preoccupation with public issues and periods of almost total concentration on individual improvement and private welfare significant in the context of CEE democratisations. Both those lines of argument are strongly supported by my findings.

The popular assumption is that CEE civil societies are weak (compare e.g. Cox 2007, Howard 2002 and 2003, Lemke 2001, Ziółkowski 2005, Jałowicki 2005). However, the problem is with the ways of measuring the level of civil society's functional weakness or strength (compare Kubik 2005, Howard 2002 and 2003, Przeworski 1995). Kubik (2005:109) notices that in Poland the data are "contaminated" by the fact that some organisations are not officially registered at the national level but 'only' at the poviát level. So there is the issue of under-reporting. Problems with the data on NGOs in various Polish registries suggest that research on civil society mirrors problems with identifying which organisations are civil society organisations. What matters are both national regulations and organisations' awareness of those regulations. In this situation only an increase or decrease in the numbers of organisations in various registries can be treated as an indicator of the involvement of civil society organisations in public affairs. This can be supported with (local) data on the number of volunteers which devote their time to support projects of civil society organisations and poviát registries of civil society organisations. Poviát registries are not part of national registries. I found that the misguided claim about the weakness of CEE civil societies was based on comparisons of national statistics.

In Poland local democracy is primarily perceived as an achievement of civil society therefore a reference to the concept in the context of local democracy makes a distinction between the two almost impossible. However, as the results of my research have shown, a community, a neighbourhood, a group of citizens/residents, an organisation, an association, the community-based Estate and an NGO have all been identified as organisations of civil society. Community, neighbourhood and a group of citizens/residents, which my interviewees identified as organisations of civil society, have features included in my definition of civil society. In Poland formal membership in organisations may not be popular but citizens readily collaborate once they have a shared objective. Since the level of formality of communities and groups is low, they are not recognised as civil society

organisations in the Polish legislature. Consequently they tend to be ignored in research on civil society.

Civil society's autonomy should follow from the exercise of civic liberties respected by a democratic state. However civil society's independence from the power structure, that is a situation in which civil society does not enter the system but influences it, can be an idealistic proposition. Civil society that gets involved in local projects that contribute to the local quality of life, frequently cooperates with local authorities. In such a situation civil society enters the system of governance by taking responsibility for the execution of a part of some public policies. It suffices to consider sources of funding of its organisations' activities and the areas of activities (e.g. Baccaro 2005, Fisher 1997, Sloat 2005, Vesínová-Kalivodová 2005). The cooperation often includes project co-funding. The local government of Poznań encourages joint projects with its grant competitions. This is a clear example of fostering partnerships.

In Poznań the number of associations - 'common' associations in particular – and NGOs cooperating with the city authorities is relatively high. Much has been achieved by 'common' associations of neighbours. In 2003 alone the city of Poznań signed contracts with 53 of them. As a result 4.7 km of roads, 1.6 km of a rain water collection system, 1.3 km of power lines, a 5 km sewage collection system and a 2.8 km water supply system were constructed. One third of the costs were covered by members of 'common' associations. At present nearly 400 'common' associations are registered with the City of Poznań.

In Poznań a cooperation-friendly environment that should be provided by the local government was seen as essential to the condition of civil society. The environment in which civil society organisations operate includes laws, regulations and attitudes of local authorities. The growth of civil society was strengthened in 2003 when the Parliamentary Act on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work was introduced. In 2007, in Poznań, the position of the plenipotentiary for NGOs was established within the City Hall and the City Advisory Board for Public Benefit Activities was appointed.

Criticism of the quality of cooperation, i.e. Sadowski's (NGO) statement that bottom up activities are not accepted by local authorities', was found to be poorly grounded in the view of the support given to NGOs. Some interviewees were of the opinion that the competitions may lead to the excessive passing of public tasks to NGOs. It was also

reported that groups of residents are increasingly less willing to co-fund investments into technical infrastructure.

Cooperation may lead to co-optation of local civil society by local government. Examples strongly confirming this observation were not found in my 2007 research on Poznań. In 2010 the Mayor attracted a number of Estate activists to join his list of 'independent' candidates for councillors. Out of 73 candidates from his list only 4 local activists were elected. The results of the 2010 local elections in Poznań demonstrated that Posnanians do not approve of civil society activists becoming part of political society.

The questions about the level of social involvement and thus, by extension, about the level of social cohesion and the condition of Polish civil society can, for the time being be answered as follows. Substantial democracy corresponds to voluntary social networking for the common good. Networking can be observed if there is a need for it. Thus Hirschman's observations about people's shifting involvement in public affairs has been confirmed. Civil society need not be strongly active at all times. When the need arises residents work together and that is why the neighbourhood and its activities are highly relevant to any evaluation of the condition of Polish civil society. Only at a later stage have community based organisations been founded to enable collaboration with local authorities. This pattern of from the bottom to the top activities is typical of civil society and practised in Poznań whose authorities try to accommodate civil society. This refers mainly to the support given to civil society by the Council.

In my thesis much space has been devoted to discussing the functioning of community-based Estates in Poznań which are a special phenomenon. Poznań's experiment with Estate Councils is a telling example of the view that civil society is a process. Estate Councils are not part of the administration but of local legislative self-government. Overall, the City Council appreciates the work of Estate Councillors. The sensitive issue is achieving a balance between administration growth and the performance of civil society, i.e. the Councils of community-based Estates.

From one perspective Estate Councils have been evaluated as effective because they monitor and decide about issues that City Councillors may overlook and are a good instrument to make society active. From another perspective their effectiveness was questioned on many grounds. The current limitations of Estate Councils' performance have

their roots in Estates' small budgets and Estate Councils' dependence on the efficiency and effectiveness of the city administration.

Turnout in Estate councils elections in Poznań is dramatically low (in 1990s the average turnout between 9.35% in 1997 and 22.9% in 1995). However, a low voter turnout does not mean automatically low civic engagement and weak civil society (Pietrzyk-Reeves 2008). The turnout grows when there are issues to be resolved (*cf.* Jałowiecki 2005). It should be underlined that Estate Councils do not carry any investments by themselves as they do not have the status of a juristic person. The execution of Estate projects is in the hands of the City executive authority. Slow implementation of Estate projects is unfavourable to the visibility of Estate councillors. Low interest in sub-local elections is to a large extent be linked to low visibility of sub-local authorities (*cf.* Matczak 2006) This situation worries councillors.

It was shown in this thesis that turnout is only one participatory mode and that other forms of local residents' involvement must be considered to obtain a more complete picture of social engagement in public affairs at the local level. My questionnaire research and some interviewees provided data on numerous residents' activities for public benefit within Estates.

Residents' involvement in Estate meetings and consultations largely depends on the subjectively judged relevance of the issue debated. Citizens' are discovering their power in consultations and in Poznań they increasingly seek approval and support of Estate councils for their projects. This is a process which has begun.

My field research took place in 2007, however where it was appropriate and possible I kept updating my data with information on the most recent developments. During my field research there was a debate on the possible reform of the Estates. The debate was initiated by the Mayor who questioned the efficiency and effectiveness of Estates. He wanted to reform the system to the effect that there would be less Estates and that they would be bigger. De facto it aimed at abandoning the 'bottom-up' idea of Estates and replacing community-based Estates with administrative Districts. Some councillors worried that such changes would make community leaders more accountable to the Mayor than to their local community. There was considerable discussion of the issues which concluded at the end of 2010 with the Mayor's proposal being rejected. In 2010 the City Council presented proposals to increase the area and population of the smallest Estates by merging them with



neighbouring ones to increase the budgets of the thus enlarged Estates. Estates were to be bigger and thus stronger in terms of their investment potential. At the same time their competencies and responsibilities were to be widened to make Estates more effective. The approval of any mergers was left to the Estate communities themselves, reaffirming their rights within the structure of governance in the city. As a result there are now 42 Estates in Poznań (were 68).

The objective of the Poznań reform is to strengthen the position of Estates on Poznań's democratic arena. Estates Councillors are to continue to support City councillors 'in the field' and act as the bridge between local communities and City authorities. The City council has also decided on a huge increase of the money allocated to Estates. In 2011 their budgets will be four times higher than in 2010. This will make Estates a stronger financial 'partner' of the City executive authorities and may enable Estates to invest in their cooperation with NGOs. In addition it has been decided that elections to all Estate councils will be held on the same date (20 March) hoping that this will increase residents' awareness of sub-local elections.

Such changes are needed not least because in the rapidly changing society post 1990 it was necessary to create new structures that could function more effectively, in particular be responsive to changing needs and expectations of local residents. The approved re-designation of Estates to strengthen the Estates and can be viewed as a step towards further devolution. To sum up, the 'neo-Tocquevillean' approach to civil society has been criticised for its assumption of the *autonomy of civil society from the state* (e.g. Howard 2002, 2003). This research demonstrates that civil society organisations do not have to be strictly self-supported and autonomous from the state. In Poland, NGOs increasingly become partners of local authorities in public joint ventures. In Poznań, civil society enters the system of governance by taking responsibility for the execution of some public policies. Grant competitions are a good example of the cooperation of local government in Poznań with civil society organisations.

## 7.2. Endnote

In this thesis, democracy has been primarily viewed as a process that affects the interface of local self-government and local civil society. However the condition of a democracy is an aggregate of democracy practiced at national and local levels. The multifaceted processes of democratisation in Poland have taken place at all levels and local developments should not be overlooked. They affected citizens and societies that needed to learn to function in a new system. This was a process of discovery.

The aim of this thesis was to investigate the functioning of democracy at the local level, focusing on local self-government and its relations with civil society in the context of democratic consolidation. It was found that the basic limitation in understanding the processes of democratic consolidation has its roots in the confusing qualification of civil society organisations in mature democracies and new democracies. Another limitation has been rooted in overlooking micro-scale (local) developments which are democratic and not necessarily visible in the macro-scale (region or country). It was found that national statistics do not give a good insight into local outcomes of democratisation. Comparative studies on democratic consolidation based on such statistics tend to overlook the difficult to measure effects which manifest themselves through activities of local authorities and local communities.

The Polish local government reform aimed at making local government effective and giving residents a chance to have their say on their daily problems and on the efficiency and quality of the delivery of services (*cf.* Sochacka 2005). The ‘neo-Tocquevillean’ approach taken proved to be effective as my research results demonstrated. In Poland the reinvention of civil society was achieved through the local government reforms. They were most relevant to the legitimation of new authorities and the rebirth of local democracy practiced by local government and citizens. Polish *gminas* – their local authorities and communities - exercise the rights to make decisions on issues most important to them. The micro-scale analysis has highlighted issues and developments that might pass unnoticed when (national) macro-scale analyses are attempted.

The processes in Poznań give both positive and less constructive support to the importance attached to local democracy. The most recent developments in Poznań indicate that in spite of the strong position of the Mayor, the City Council is responsive to civil society and supports civil society organisations. Results of the 2010 local elections demonstrate that in

Poznań residents do not approve of local civil society activists joining the political society. Local democracy has reached a new stage where the effectiveness of civil society may grow with further devolution advocated by the Estates and the City Council.

If modern democracy has to meet the institutional minimum of Dahl's (1989) 'polyarchy', Poland meets the criteria. However, this definition of democracy is not indicative of the actual quality of democracy. Its quality depends on how it is practised and by whom. Polish local self-government which is traditionally based on communities has proven to be important to Polish democratic reform. Poznań, in which Estates have been established and thus devolution progressed further, and where civil society both cooperates with local government and strongly voices its criticism about its performance, exemplifies the advancement of Polish democratic consolidation.

More general findings include the need for a carefully designed methodology that allows for researching the embedding of changes at the micro-scale and a multidisciplinary research to see the 'whole picture'. A major challenge in my research was that neither the concepts of local government nor civil society have an established content. The comprehension of the functions of local self-government stems from different national traditions. Administrative structures, procedures and statistical databases in EU member states, not to mention other countries, differ too much to allow for informed comparative analyses. Examples are the differences in the size, population and budget of basic administrative units. Civil society has wide and narrow definitions and NGOs are variously defined. As in different countries the understanding of the two terms – local government and civil society - may differ, before a comparative analysis is performed, national laws and regulations on local government and civil society organisations should be compared. In my opinion the issue of methodology is crucial to analyses of democratic consolidation. If research methods are not chosen carefully, they limit the validity of the subsequent evaluation of democratic consolidation or of a comparative evaluation of the condition of any democracies. It follows that carefully designed case studies of local democratic practices are needed giving an essential insight into the actual performance of democracy. I chose to base my research on quantitative and qualitative data and found the reviewing of Polish laws essential to my analyses.

To be sure local democracy in Poznań has flaws. The legacy of the communist period is still apparent in some of the attitudes of City officials, in the expectations citizens can have

of local authorities and the unwillingness of the latter at times to accept criticism. The working environment, which is vital to the quality of civil society, still requires to become more sympathetic to civil society. Equally, conflict arises where citizens fail to distinguish between 'private' interests and the interest-based activities of groups of citizens. This is part of the learning process of becoming democratic where it can be claimed that there is substantial evidence of how residents and their local authority are learning the lessons of democracy.

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century CEE countries were perceived by Pridham (2001:2) as "the most likely success cases in moving without serious diversion through democratic consolidation". However democracy is always an unfinished project. In Poznań, as this research has amply demonstrated, political processes are conforming to democratic expectations and are contributory to the wider national project of democratic consolidation.

## Appendix 1

### A 1-1: Interview Questions in English

1. In your opinion, was the decision made 16 years ago, to start changing Poland from “the bottom”, which means from creating local government, justified?
2. What do *local democracy* and *civil society* mean for you in practice?
3. Reading articles published in local and national newspapers after last local government elections, I have had an impression that for the electors it is more important now to vote for individuals than for parties. Can we talk about democratisation of the public life at the local level?
4. In what way does the local government [of the city of Poznań] shape the civil society?
5. How does the local government [in Poznań] cooperate with the NGOs? Please give examples.
6. It is said that “culture is the yeasts of the civil society”. In what way does the local government [in Poznań] support cultural projects at the level of the city and estates?
7. Please give examples of the use of the internet in building local democracy and civil society? What is your assessment of the role of the internet in the functioning of local democracy in Poznań?
8. What channels are used by the local government and citizens [of Poznań] to communicate with each other (information dissemination, contacts)? To what extent is the communication reciprocal?
9. The actual exercise of the citizens’ right to voice their opinions. Local initiatives [in the city] at the levels of estates and city. Please elaborate.
10. What role do social consultations play in Poznań? What impact do they have on decision-making process? Please give some examples.
11. In your opinion, where is the borderline between a civil initiative, civil society actively taking part in their local life and *pieniactwo*<sup>432</sup> that disturb operations of local authorities?
12. What is the role of the estates in the work of the local government? Please give examples.
13. What is the motivation for considering a possible introduction of changes to the functioning of estates’ councils in Poznań?

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<sup>432</sup> literally litigious behaviour, generally refers to making a fuss, i.e. to a noisy disordered behaviour. *Pieniactwo* seems to be used now meaning noisy disordered behaviour and refers to unjustified boasting and to disruptive and disordered adult conduct to win attention. *Pieniactwo* is close to English ‘working yourself into a lather’ taking action while being unduly upset about something or disapproving of something.

## A 2-2: Interview Questions in Polish

1. Jakie są Pana/Pani zdaniem najistotniejsze efekty wprowadzenia 17 lat temu reformy administracyjnej w Polsce? Czy decyzja o tym, by zacząć zmieniać Polskę od „dołu” to jest od stworzenia samorządów była słuszna?
2. Jak Pan/Pani rozumie pojęcia demokracja lokalna i społeczeństwo obywatelskie?
3. Czytając powyborcze artykuły w prasie odniosłam wrażenie, że dla wyborców ważniejsze staje się głosowanie na konkretne osoby. Czy można mówić o demokratyzacji życia publicznego na poziomie lokalnym?
4. W jaki sposób samorząd miasta Poznania aktywizuje społeczeństwo obywatelskie?
5. W jaki sposób samorząd w Poznaniu współpracuje z organizacjami pozarządowymi? Proszę podać przykłady.
6. Mówi się, że „kultura jest drożdżami społeczeństwa obywatelskiego”. W jaki sposób miasto wspiera projekty kulturalne na poziomie [miejskim, dzielnicowym, osiedlowym]?
7. Jaki jest potencjał wykorzystania internetu w budowie demokracji lokalnej i społeczeństwa obywatelskiego? Czy władze Poznania w wystarczający sposób wykorzystują ten instrument mogący wspomagać demokrację lokalną?
8. Jak Pan/Pani ocenia obecne funkcjonowanie przyjętych w Poznaniu rozwiązań dotyczących przepływu informacji i kontaktów Urzędu Miasta z mieszkańcami? Na ile jest on dwustronny?
9. Obywatel ma głos - lokalne inicjatywy na poziomie osiedli, dzielnic i miasta. Proszę o rozwinięcie.
10. Jaką rolę w Poznaniu odgrywają konsultacje społeczne? Jaki mają one wpływ na podejmowane decyzje – proszę o przykłady.
11. Gdzie Pana/Pani zdaniem leży granica między aktywnością społeczną, ruchami społecznym a pieniactwem, przeszkadzaniem władzom lokalnym w pracy?
12. Jaką rolę odgrywają jednostki pomocnicze (rady osiedli) w pracach samorządu w Poznaniu? Proszę podać przykłady.
13. Dlaczego w Poznaniu planuje się zmiany w zakresie funkcjonowania samorządów pomocniczych?

## A 1-3: Questionnaire in English

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am from Poznań and I am doing my PhD at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. My PhD is about *The development of local democracy in Poland: a case study of the city of Poznań*. In my research I am concentrating on the functioning of accessory units, that is estate councils. I am kindly asking you to answer questions in this questionnaire. The questionnaire is anonymous. If you were interested in the results of my research or if you have any questions related to it, please write to me directly at Olga.Mausch@ges.gla.ac.uk or call me at 0660001841.

Faithfully yours,

Olga Mausch

**Instruction:** Please mark your answer with an X next to the answer chosen, in the empty box on the right side. When under a question there are spaces with dots (.....), please given a written answer. Depending on your decision it can be few words or longer. Answers to some of the questions cause skipping the next question. Such cases are described in details below.

### PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS:

#### 1. Did you take part in last parliamentary elections (election to Sejm or Senat)?

Yes	
No	
No, because I was under 18	

#### 2. Did you take part in last presidential elections (does not matter in which turn)?

Yes	
No	
No, because I was under 18	

#### 3. Did you take part in last local government elections (election of city councillors or city mayor)?

Yes	
No	
No, because I was under 18	

If you did not take part in last local government elections please go to question 5.

If you did take part in last local government elections please go to question 4.

#### 4. Assuming that in next local government elections the same people will be candidates as last time, will you vote for the same candidate for the city councillor, as in last elections? Please explain why.

Yes, definitely	
Probably	
Probably not	
No, definitely	

#### 5. Do you think that the citizens can influence decisions of the city affairs?

Yes	
Probably	
Probably not	
No	

**6. Do you think that the citizens can influence decisions of the voivodship matters?**

Yes	
Probably	
Probably not	
No	

**7. Do you think that the citizens can influence decisions that affect Poland?**

Yes	
Probably	
Probably not	
No	

**8. What, if any, has been your involvement in local politics during the last five years apart from voting? Please give examples.**

I have signed a petition demanding.....	
I have taken part in a protest meeting.....	
I have helped organize a local meeting.....	
Other.....	
I was not involved at all.....	

**FUNCTIONING OF THE CITY HALL OF POZNAŃ****9. How often do you go to the City Hall, seeking answers to matters of concern?**

More than 10 times a year or more	
Few times a year	
No more than once a year	
Once for few years	
Never	

**10. How effective do you think the Mayor of Poznań is doing his job overseeing the government of the city? Please give your mark in scale 5-1, where 5 means "very good" and 1 means "very bad".**

5 4 3 2 1

**11. How effective do you think the City Council is doing its job overseeing the government of the city? Please give your mark in scale 5-1, where 5 means "very good" and 1 means "very bad".**

5 4 3 2 1

**12. Do you know any of the City Councillors personally? If yes, please give his or her name.**

Yes, more than one.....	
Yes, I know one.....	
No, I do not know any	

**13. Would you tell a Councillor about your individual problem (e.g with rent) that can be resolved by the city council?**

Yes, definitely	
Probably	
Probably not	
No, definitely	



**14. In whose interest, generally speaking, do you think, the City Councillors work?**

Their own	
Defined pressure groups (e.g. political parties, lobbying groups)	
Those citizens, who elected them	
All the citizens and the whole city	

**15. To what extent, in your opinion, do the authorities of Poznań (mayor and councillors) make their decisions having in mind the expectations and needs of the citizens? Please give your mark in scale 5-1, where 5 means "to a large extent" and 1 means "No, they do not do it at all".**

5 4 3 2 1

**IN POZNAŃ THERE ARE FUNCTIONING ACCESSORY UNITS CALLED ESTATE COUNCILS:****16. Do you know the name of the Estate Council serving your area? If yes, please give its name.**

Yes.....	
No	

**17. Did you take part in the last estate council elections?**

Yes	
No	
No, because I was under 18	

**18. Do you take part in the Estate meetings?**

Yes, always	
Yes, often	
No, I prefer not to take part	
I have never taken part in such meetings	

**19. Do you know who is a member of your estate council? If yes, please give his/her name.**

Yes.....	
No	

**20. Would you tell a Estate Councillor about your individual problem (e.g. concerning noise next to your home) that can be resolved in the city?**

Yes, definitely	
Probably	
Probably not	
No, definitely	

**21. Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council? (e.g. notices, information displayed on notice boards, in local press, on the internet)**

Yes, to a large extent (Go to question 23)	
Rather yes (Go to question 23)	
Rather not (Go to question 22)	
No, I am not receiving them at all (Go to question 22)	

**22. Why do you think that the announcements and information do not reach you?**

I am not interested	
Difficult to say	
They are disseminated in a wrong way	
Other reason.....	

**23. What sources of information about life in your estate or city are you using most often? Please mark max. 5 answers and rank them in order from 5 to 1, where 5 means “used the most” and 1 means “used the least”.**

Notices displayed in the Town Hall	
Notices displayed on notice boards	
Notices displayed in shops	
Notices displayed at bus' stops and inside buses	
Local press	
Internet	
Informed friends (e.g. Town Hall officials, councillors)	
Information passed by people in the shops, on the street, by neighbours	
Meeting organised by the Estate Council	
Organised meetings with the Mayor, Councillors, Officials	
From family	
Flyers, folders sent to you by the Town Hall	
Other..... ..... .....	

**FUNCTIONING OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN YOUR ESTATE:****24. Do you think that most citizens are interested in what is happening in your estate?**

Yes	
No	

**25. In your opinion, would the inhabitants of your estate willingly engage in joint activities, initiatives, if they would bring benefits to all the inhabitants? (e.g. the idea of building together a sport field where all could spend free time)**

Yes	
No	

**26. Would you engage in such an action?**

Yes (Go to question 28)	
No (Go to question 27)	

**27. What hinders you the most, from taking part in such actions?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**28. In the last few years did you try to become involved in some kind of activity which aimed to benefit the City? If yes, please give an example of that activity.**

Yes.....	
No	

**29. In the last few years did you try to become involved in some kind of activity which aimed to benefit the Estate community? If yes, please give an example of that activity.**

Yes.....	
No	

**30. In the last few years did you try to become involved in some kind of activity which aimed to benefit the parish community? If yes, please give an example of that activity.**

Yes.....	
No	

**31. Have you ever accomplished something working together with your neighbours? If yes, please give an example of that activity.**

Yes.....	
No	

**32. In your opinion, can we generally trust people?**

Yes	
Yes, but you still have to be careful	
No	

**33. Do you have friendly relations with your neighbours? If yes, approx. with how many people?**

No	
1 -2	
3 – 4	
5 - 6	
More than 6	

**34. Do your neighbours (you can mark all the answers):**

Come to your parties, birthdays	
Go together with you on holidays	
Spend Christmas or Easter together with you	
Visit each other without notification	

**35. Could you borrow “a cup of sugar” from you neighbour? Could you ask him/her for help?**

Yes	
No	

- 36. Are you a member of some kind of organization active in your estate? (e.g. school board, parents' council at school, sport club, pensioners club, religious organisation, choir). If yes, please give its name.**

Yes (Go to question 37).....	
No (Go to question 39)	

- 37. How strong do you feel connected with this organization on the territory of your estate? Please mark on scale 5-1, where 5 means "very strong" and 1 means "at all".**

**5 4 3 2 1**

- 38. Do your colleagues from those organisations (you can mark all the answers):**

Come to your parties, birthdays	
Go together with you on holidays	
Spend Christmas or Easter together with you	
Visit each other without notification	

- 39. If you were in a difficult life situation (e.g. you lost a job) who would you ask for help..... Please mark your answer on scale 5-1, where 5 means "the first person you would contact" and 1 means "the last person you would contact":**

Colleague from work, school	
Member of a family	
Neighbour	
Friend	
Colleague from an organisation	
Someone else.....	

- 40. How strong do you feel connected with your estate? Please mark on the scale 5-1, where 5 means "very much" and 1 means "not at all".**

**5 4 3 2 1**

- 41. What is the place where you contact most inhabitants of your estate (you can mark more than one):**

School	
Health Center	
Local Shop	
Church	
Park e.g. walking your dog	
Other..... .....	

- 42. What are the main three problems that need to be solved on your Estate?**

1..... .....
2..... .....
3..... .....

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:****1. Gender:**

Male	
Female	

**2. Please give your age range:**

15 – 24	
25 – 34	
35 – 44	
45 – 54	
55 – 64	
65 and more	

**3. What is your marital status?**

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Widow/widower	

**4. For how long have you been living in Ławica/ Św. Łazarz estate?**

Less than a year	
1 year to 5 years	
6 years to 10 years	
11 years to 15 years	
16 years to 20 year	
More than 20 years	

**5. Are you at present:**

A student	
Working full time	
Working part time	
Unemployed	
Retired/Pensioner	
Not formally employed – I am looking after my family	
I do not work for other reasons	

**6. What is the level of education that you have completed so far?**

Elementary	
Primary School	
Vocational School	
Secondary Comprehensive/Grammar School	
Secondary Technical School	
Higher education – graduate level	
Higher education – postgraduates level	

**7. How many people including you live in your household?**

1 – 2	
3 – 4	
5 or more	

**8. In what range is your family income (after tax; zł/month)?**

Less than 1000	
1001 – 1500	
1501 – 2000	
2001 – 2500	
2501 – 3000	
3001 – 4000	
4000 – 5000	
More than 5001	
Difficult to say; I do not know	

**THANK YOU!**

## A 1-4 Questionnaire in Polish

Szanowni Państwo,

Jestem poznanią i piszę pracę doktorską na University of Glasgow w Szkocji na temat „Rozwój demokracji lokalnej w Polsce na przykładzie Miasta Poznania”. W moich badaniach koncentruję się na funkcjonowaniu samorządów pomocniczych, czyli rad osiedli. Zwracam się do Państwa z uprzejmą prośbą o odpowiedzi na pytania zawarte w niniejszej ankiecie. Ankieta ta jest anonimowa. Jeśli byliby Państwo zainteresowani wynikami moich badań lub też mieli jakiegokolwiek pytania z nimi związane, proszę kierować je bezpośrednio do mnie pod adresem mailowym Olga.Mausch@ges.gla.ac.uk albo pod numerem telefonu 0660001841.

Z poważaniem,

Olga Mausch

**Instrukcja:** Odpowiedzi na pytania proszę zaznaczyć zakreślając znakiem X wybraną przez Państwa odpowiedź w pustej kratce po prawej stronie. Gdy poniżej pytania znajdują się miejsca wykropkowane (.....), proszę udzielić pisemnej odpowiedzi. W zależności od Państwa decyzji może to być od kilku słów do kilku zdań. Odpowiedź na niektóre pytania powoduje, że należy opuścić następne. Przypadki takie są dokładnie opisane poniżej. W przypadku pytań ze skalą od 5 do 1, proszę zakreślić wybraną ocenę.

### UDZIAŁ W WYBORACH:

#### 1. Czy brał/a Pan/Pani udział w ostatnich wyborach parlamentarnych (wybory do Sejmu i Senatu)?

Tak	
Nie	
Nie, gdyż nie miałem/miałam 18 lat	

#### 2. Czy brał/a Pan/Pani udział w ostatnich wyborach prezydenta RP (obojętnie, w której turze)?

Tak	
Nie	
Nie, gdyż nie miałem/miałam 18 lat	

#### 3. Czy brał/a Pan/Pani udział w ostatnich wyborach samorządowych (wybór rady miasta oraz prezydenta miasta)?

Tak	
Nie	
Nie, gdyż nie miałem/miałam 18 lat	

Jeśli *nie* brał/brała Pan/Pani udziału w ostatnich wyborach samorządowych, to proszę przejść do pytania 5.

Jeśli *tak*, to proszę przejść do pytania 4.

#### 4. Załóżmy, że w najbliższych wyborach samorządowych wystartują ci sami kandydaci. Czy oddałby/oddalaby Pan/Pani swój głos na tego samego kandydata na radnego, co w poprzednich wyborach? Proszę podać powód.

Zdecydowanie tak	
Raczej tak	
Raczej nie	
Zdecydowanie nie	

#### 5. Czy uważa Pan/Pani, że obywatele mają wpływ na sprawy miasta?

Tak	
Raczej tak	
Raczej nie	
Nie	

**6. Czy uważa Pan/Pani, że obywatele mają wpływ na sprawy województwa?**

Tak	
Raczej tak	
Raczej nie	
Nie	

**7. Czy uważa Pan/Pani, że obywatele mają wpływ na sprawy kraju?**

Tak	
Raczej tak	
Raczej nie	
Nie	

**8. Jaki, poza udziałem w wyborach lokalnych, był Pana/Pani udział w lokalnej polityce w ciągu ostatnich pięciu lat? Proszę podać przykłady.**

Podpisanie petycji w sprawie .....	
.....	
Udział w proteście, pikiecie w sprawie.....	
.....	
Pomoc w organizacji zebrania osiedlowego w sprawie .....	
.....	
Inne .....	
.....	
Brak udziału	

**FUNKCJONOWANIE URZĘDU MIASTA POZNANIA:****9. Jak często bywa Pan/Pani w Urzędzie Miasta, aby załatwić ważne dla siebie sprawy?**

Kilkanaście razy w ciągu roku lub więcej	
Kilka razy w ciągu roku	
Nie więcej niż raz w roku	
Raz na kilka lat	
Wcale	

**10. Jak ocenia Pan/Pani pracę Prezydenta Miasta Poznania? Proszę ocenić w skali 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „bardzo dobrze”, a 1 „bardzo źle”.**

5 4 3 2 1

**11. Jak ocenia Pan/Pani pracę Rady Miasta Poznania? Proszę ocenić w skali 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „bardzo dobrze”, a 1 „bardzo źle”.**

5 4 3 2 1



**12. Czy zna Pan/Pani osobiście jakiegoś radnego/radną z naszego miasta? Jeżeli tak proszę podać nazwisko.**

Tak, więcej niż jednego/jedną.....	
Tak, znam jednego/jedną.....	
Nie, nie znam żadnego/żadnej	

**13. Czy zgłosiłby Pan/Pani radnej/radnemu prywatny problem (np. dotyczący wysokości czynszu), który można rozwiązać w Radzie miasta?**

Zdecydowanie tak	
Raczej tak	
Raczej nie	
Zdecydowanie nie	

**14. Jak Pan/Pani myśli, w czym interesie, ogólnie rzecz biorąc, działają radni Miasta Poznania?**

Swoim własnym	
Określonych grup nacisku (np. partii politycznych, pewnych grup interesów)	
Tych mieszkańców, którzy ich wybrali	
Wszystkich mieszkańców i całego miasta	

**15. W jakim stopniu według Pani/Pana władze Miasta Poznania (prezydent/radni) podejmując swoje decyzje kierują się oczekiwaniami i potrzebami mieszkańców? Proszę ocenić w skali 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „w bardzo dużym stopniu”, a 1 „brak brania pod uwagę oczekiwań”.**

5 4 3 2 1

**W POZNANIU FUNKCJONUJĄ SAMORZĄDY POMOCNICZE ZWANE RADAMI OSIEDLI:**

**16. Czy wie Pan/Pani na terenie jakiej rady osiedla mieszka? Jeżeli tak, proszę podać nazwę.**

Tak.....	
Nie	

**17. Czy brał/a Pan/Pani udział w ostatnich wyborach do rad osiedli?**

Tak	
Nie	
Nie, gdyż nie miałem/miałam 18 lat	

**18. Czy bierze Pan/Pani udział w zebraniach osiedlowych?**

Tak, zawsze	
Tak, często	
Nie, raczej nie biorę udziału	
Nigdy nie brałem/brałam udziału	

- 19. Czy orientuje się Pan/Pani, kto jest radnym osiedla, na którym Pan/Pani mieszka? Jeżeli tak, proszę podać nazwisko.**

Tak.....	
Nie	

- 20. Czy zgłosiłby Pan/Pani radnemu osiedla prywatny problem (np. dotyczący hałasu pod domem), który można rozwiązać na terenie osiedla?**

Zdecydowanie tak	
Raczej tak	
Raczej nie	
Zdecydowanie nie	

- 21. Czy docierają do Pana/Pani komunikaty oraz informacje od Rady Osiedla? (np. ogłoszenia, informacje zamieszczone na tablicach i słupach ogłoszeniowych, w prasie, na stronie internetowej)**

Tak, w dużym stopniu (Proszę przejść do pytania 23)	
Raczej tak (Proszę przejść do pytania 23)	
Raczej nie (Proszę przejść do pytania 22)	
Nie, nie docierają wcale (Proszę przejść do pytania 22)	

- 22. Jak Pan/Pani myśli, dlaczego te komunikaty i informacje do Pana/Pani nie docierają?**

Nie interesują mnie	
Trudno powiedzieć	
Są źle przekazywane	
Inny powód.....	

- 23. Z jakich źródeł mówiących o życiu osiedla lub miasta Pan/Pani korzysta? Proszę wskazać max. 5 odpowiedzi w skali 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „najczęstsze korzystanie”, a 1 – „najrzadsze korzystanie”.**

Ogłoszenia w Urzędzie Miasta	
Ogłoszenia na tablicach i słupach ogłoszeniowych	
Ogłoszenia w sklepach	
Ogłoszenia na przystankach i w autobusach	
Lokalna prasa	
Internet	
Kompetentni znajomi (np. pracownicy Urzędu Miasta, znajomi radni, itp.)	
Informacje uzyskane na ulicy, w sklepie, od sąsiadów	
Zebrania osiedlowe	
Zorganizowane spotkania z prezydentem, radnymi, urzędnikami	
Od rodziny	
Ulotki, foldery przesyłane do domu z Urzędu Miasta	
Inne.....	
.....	
.....	

**FUNKCJONOWANIE SPOŁECZNOŚCI LOKALNEJ NA PANA/PANI OSIEDLU:**

**24. Czy według Pana/Pani inni mieszkańcy interesują się tym, co dzieje się na terenie osiedla?**

Tak	
Nie	

**25. Czy Pana/Pani zdaniem mieszkańcy osiedla chętnie włączyliby się w jakąś wspólną akcję, inicjatywę, gdyby miała ona przynieść korzyść wszystkim mieszkańcom? (np. pomysł wybudowania boiska sportowego, gdzie młodzież i dorośli mogliby spędzać wolny czas)**

Tak	
Nie	

**26. A czy Pan/Pani włączyłby/włączyłaby się w taką akcję?**

Tak (Proszę przejść do pytania 28)	
Nie (Proszę przejść do pytania 27)	

**27. Co w największym stopniu powstrzymuje Pana/Panią od włączania się w takie akcje?**

.....

.....

.....

**28. Czy w ostatnich kilku latach próbował/próbowała Pan/Pani włączyć się w jakieś działanie na rzecz swojego miasta? Jeżeli tak, to proszę podać rodzaj podjętej aktywności**

Tak.....	
Nie	

**29. Czy w ostatnich kilku latach próbował/próbowała Pan/Pani włączyć się w jakieś działanie na rzecz swojego osiedla? Jeżeli tak, to proszę podać rodzaj podjętej aktywności.**

Tak.....	
Nie	

**30. Czy w ostatnich kilku latach próbował/próbowała Pan/Pani włączyć się w jakieś działanie na rzecz swojej parafii? Jeżeli tak, to proszę podać rodzaj podjętej aktywności.**

Tak.....	
Nie	

**31. Czy kiedykolwiek zdarzyło się Panu/Pani coś osiągnąć działając wspólnie z sąsiadami? Jeżeli tak, proszę podać przykład.**

Tak.....	
Nie	

**32. Czy według Pana/Pani można, z zasady, ufać innym ludziom?**

Tak	
Tak, ale mimo wszystko należy być ostrożnym	
Nie	

**33. Czy utrzymuje Pan/Pani bliższe kontakty z sąsiadami, jeżeli tak, to w przybliżeniu z iloma osobami?**

Nie	
1 -2	
3 – 4	
5 - 6	
Więcej	

**34. Czy Pana/Pani sąsiedzi (można zaznaczyć wszystkie odpowiedzi):**

Bywają u Pana/i na imieninach/urodzinach	
Wyjeżdżają Państwo razem na wakacje	
Spędzają Państwo razem święta	
Odwiedzają się Państwo „bez zapowiedzi”	

**35. Czy mógłby/mogłaby Pan/Pani pożyczyć od sąsiada „szklankę cukru”, poprosić o pomoc?**

Tak	
Nie	

**36. Czy jest Pan/Pani członkiem jakiejś organizacji na terenie osiedla? (np. komitet szkolny, rada rodziców, klub sportowy, stowarzyszenie emerytów, organizacja religijna, chór). Jeżeli takm to proszę podać jej nazwę.**

Tak (proszę przejść do pytania 37) .....	
Nie (Proszę przejść do pytania 39)	

**37. Jak mocno czuje się Pan/Pani związana z tą organizacją działającą na terenie osiedla?**

Proszę ocenić w skali 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „bardzo mocno”, a 1 „wcale”:

5 4 3 2 1

**38. Czy Pana/Pani znajomi z tych organizacji (można zaznaczyć wszystkie odpowiedzi):**

Bywają u Pana/i na imieninach/urodzinach	
Wyjeżdżają Państwo razem na wakacje	
Spędzają Państwo razem święta	
Odwiedzają się Państwo „bez zapowiedzi”	

39. Gdyby znalazł się Pan/Pani w trudnej sytuacji życiowej, np. straciłby/straciłaby Pan/Pani pracę zwróciłby się Pan/Pani o pomoc do....

Proszę ocenić w skali od 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „pierwszą osobę, do której zwrócono by się o pomoc”, a 1 oznacza „ostatnią osobę, do której zwrócono by się o pomoc”:

Znajomego z pracy, szkoły	
Członka rodziny	
Sąsiada	
Przyjaciela	
Znajomego z organizacji	
Kogoś innego.....	

40. Jak silnie czuje się Pan/Pani związany ze swoim osiedlem? Proszę ocenić w skali 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „bardzo mocno”, a 1 oznacza „wcale”:

5 4 3 2 1

41. Ośrodek kontaktów z mieszkańcami osiedla to dla Pana/Pani (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź):

Szkoła	
Ośrodek zdrowia	
Lokalny sklep	
Kościół	
Park, spacer	
Inne.....	
.....	

42. Jakiego Pana/Pani zdaniem trzy najistotniejsze problemy wymagające rozwiązania na terenie Osiedla?

Jak skuteczne są władze w rozwiązywaniu tych trzech problemów? Proszę ocenić w skali 5-1, gdzie 5 oznacza „bardzo skuteczne”, a 1 oznacza „bardzo nieskuteczne”:

1.....
.....
.....
2.....
.....
.....
3.....
.....
.....

**METRYCZKA:****1. Płeć:**

Mężczyzna	
Kobieta	

**2. Proszę podać swój przedział wiekowy:**

15 – 24 lat	
25 – 34 lat	
35 – 44 lat	
45 – 54 lat	
55 – 64 lat	
65 i więcej lat	

**3. Jaki jest Pana/Pani stan cywilny?**

Kawaler / panna	
Żonaty / zamężna	
Rozwiedziony / rozwiedziona	
Wdowiec / wdowa	

**4. Od ilu lat mieszka Pan/Pani na osiedlu Ławica lub Św. Łazarz?**

Krócej niż rok	
Od 1 do 5 lat	
Od 6 do 10 lat	
Od 11 do 15 lat	
Od 16 do 20 lat	
Dłużej niż 20 lat	

**5. Czy obecnie Pan/Pani się zajmuje:**

Studiuje, uczy się	
Pracuję na pełen etat	
Pracuję na niepełny etat	
Prowadzę gospodarstwo rolne	
Jestem bezrobotny / bezrobotna	
Jestem emerytem / rencistką	
Nie jestem formalnie zatrudniona – zajmuję się rodziną	
Nie pracuję z innych powodów	

**6. Jakiego ma Pan/Pani w tej chwili wykształcenie (chodzi o ukończoną do tej pory szkołę, uczelnię)?**

Podstawowe	
Gimnazjalne	
Zawodowe	
Średnie ogólnokształcące	
Średnie techniczne	
Licencjackie	
Wyższe	

**7. Ile osób łącznie z Panem/Panią, liczy Pana/Pani gospodarstwo domowe?**

1 – 2	
3 – 4	
5 lub więcej	

**8. W jakim przedziale mieści się miesięczny (zł) dochód netto Pana/Pani rodziny?**

Poniżej 1000	
1001 – 1500	
1501 – 2000	
2001 – 2500	
2501 – 3000	
3001 – 4000	
4000 – 5000	
Powyżej 5001	
Trudno powiedzieć, nie wiem	

**DZIĘKUJĘ!**

**A 1-5: Interviewees, March - August 2007**

No.	Affiliation	Name and Surname	Function/Expertise
1	Local government expert	Kulesza, Michał	Former Government Plenipotentiary for the Reform of Public Administration; Professor
2	Local government expert	Regulski, Jerzy	President of the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy 'Chief architect' of local government reform in Poland, Former cabinet minister, Professor
3	MP (PO) Civic Platform	Dzikowski, Waldy	Former Mayor ( <i>Wójt</i> ) of Tarnowo Podgórne Commune Member of parliamentary Commission for Local Government and Regional Policies Członek Sejmowej Komisji ds Samorządu Terytorialnego i Polityki Regionalnej
4	MP (SLD) Democratic Left Alliance	Łybacka, Krystyna	Former Minister of Education
5	MP (PO) Civic Platform	Stuligrosz, Michał	Former Councillor, City of Poznań
6	MP (PiS) Law and Justice	Tomczak, Jacek	Former candidate for President of Poznań (local election 2006) Former Councillor City of Poznań
7	MP, Senator (PiS) Law and Justice	Alexandrowicz, Przemysław	Former City Councillor
8	MP, Senator (PO) Civic Platform	Ziółkowski, Marek	Deputy Parliament Speaker <i>Vicemarszałek Senatu</i> Sociologist, Professor
9	City Council, Antoninek – Zieliniec-Kobylepole Estate Council	Bielerzewski, Andrzej	Independent, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Municipal Utilities and Housing Policy Commission Wiceprzewodniczący Komisji Gospodarki Komunalnej i Polityki Mieszkaniowej
10	City Council, Winiary Estate Council	Chudobiecki, Jan	Independent, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Education Commission Wiceprzewodniczący Komisji Oświaty i Wychowania
11	City Council, Former Św. Łazarz Estate Council	Dudziak, Lidia	(PiS) Law and Justice, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Municipal Commission for Settlement Elections Zastępca Przewodniczącego Miejskiej Komisji ds. Wyborów Osiedlowych
12	City Council	Ganowicz, Grzegorz	(PO) Civic Platform, Councillor Chairman, Poznań City Council Przewodniczący Rady Miasta Poznania
13	City Council, Warszawskie Estate Council	Grześ, Michał	(PiS) Law and Justice, Councillor Chairman, Municipal Utilities and Housing Policy Commission Przewodniczący Komisji Gospodarki Komunalnej i Polityki Mieszkaniowej



14	City Council	Kretkowska, Katarzyna	Independent, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Audit Commission Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji Rewizyjnej Former candidate for President of Poznań (local election 2006)
15	City Council	Kręglewski, Wojciech	(PO) Civic Platform, Councillor Chairman, Civic Platform Councillors' Club Przewodniczący Klubu Radnych Platformy Obywatelskiej, Chairman, Town Planning Policy Commission Przewodniczący Komisji Polityki Przestrzennej
16	City Council	Lewandowski, Tomasz	("Lewica i Demokraci") The Left and Democrats <sup>433</sup> , Councillor Chairman, Municipal Commission for Estate Level Elections Przewodniczący Miejskiej Komisji ds. Wyborów Osiedlowych
17	City Council	Mączkowski, Krzysztof	(PiS) Law and Justice, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Poznań City Council Wiceprzewodniczący Rady Miasta Poznania
18	City Council	Nowakowski, Andrzej	("Lewica i Demokraci") The Left and Democrats, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Poznań City Council Wiceprzewodniczący Rady Miasta Poznania Former Voivod
19	City Council, Świerczewo Estate Council	Nowicka, Maria	(PO) Civic Platform, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Local Government Commission Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji Samorządowej
20	City Council, Sołacz Estate Council	Nowowiejska, Janina	(PO) Civic Platform, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Culture and HEI/Science Commission Wiceprzewodnicząca Komisji Kultury i Nauki
21	City Council	Przybylak, Maciej	(PiS) Law and Justice, Councillor Deputy Chairman, Sports and Tourism Commission Wiceprzewodniczący Komisji Kultury Fizycznej i Turystyki
22	City Council	Szczuciński, Antoni	("Lewica i Demokraci") The Left and Democrats, Councillor Chairman, The Left and Democrats Councillors' Club Przewodniczący Klubu Radnych "Lewica i Demokraci", Chairman, Culture and Science Commission Przewodniczący Komisji Kultury i Nauki

23	City Council, Żegrze Estate Council	Wiśniewski, Mariusz	(PO) Civic Platform, Councilor Secretary, Civic Platform Councillors' Club Sekretarz Klubu Radnych PO Deputy Chairman, Security and Public Order Commission Wiceprzewodniczący Komisji Bezpieczeństwa i Porządku Publicznego,
24	City Council, Św. Łazarz Estate Council	Woškowiak, Wojciech	(PiS) Law and Justice, Councillor Chairman, Local Government Commission Przewodniczący Komisji Samorządowej, Deputy Chairman, Security and Public Order Commission Wiceprzewodniczący Komisji Bezpieczeństwa i Porządku Publicznego Chairman of Estate Council
25	Ławica Estate Council	Chmiel-Skrzypczak, Aleksandra	Chairman of Estate Council
26	Św. Łazarz Estate Council	Pucher, Jacek	Deputy Chairman of the Estate Council Board
27	Ławica Estate Council	Zagrocki, Ryszard	Chairman of the Estate Council Board
28	Ławica Estate Council	Sobczak, Jacek	Ławica Estate Councillor
29	City Hall	Grobelny, Ryszard	President of Poznań, Third Term, President, Association of Polish Cities
30	City Hall	City Hall Official 1	Anonymous
31	City Hall	City Hall Official 3	Anonymous
32	City Hall	City Hall Official 4	Anonymous
33	City Council	Kołodziejczak, Piotr	Secretary, City Council
34	City Council	Groblewski, Włodzimierz	Director, Office for Fostering Social Relations Biuro Kształtowania Relacji Społecznych
35	Ministry of Interior and Administration	Mikołajczak, Liliana	Deputy Director, Public Administration Department Zastępca Dyrektora Departamentu Administracji Publicznej
36	Wielkopolskie Voivodship Office	Pacia, Przemysław	Director, Civic Matters and Passports Department Wydziału Spraw Obywatelskich i Paszportów
37	Wielkopolska Voivodship Assembly	Jankowiak, Wojciech	(PSL) Polish Peasant Party, Member of the Board
38	Poznań Region ( <i>ziemski</i> , rural) Powiat ( <i>Powiat</i> <i>Poznański</i> )	Graczyk, Maciej	Deputy Director, Cabinet of Poznań Region ( <i>ziemski</i> , rural) Powiat Starosta <i>Zastępca</i> <i>Dyrektora Gabinetu</i>
39	NGO	Sadowki, Tomasz	Barka Foundation Founder and director working closely with 6 Estate Councils
40	NGO	Stosic, Mirosława	SIC! Polish-Dutch Social Innovation Centre in and for Poland Working closely with Estate Councils

41	Local newspaper	Bojarski, Piotr	<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i> , Poznań Region Supplement Political Journalist writing about the work of Poznań City authorities
42	Local newspaper	Przybylska, Aleksandra	<i>Gazeta Wyborcza</i> , Poznań Region Supplement Local Government Journalist writing about the work of Poznań City authorities
43	AMU, Department of Sociology [Local Government Research Group]	Bondyra, Krzysztof	Former Councillor, Powiat Wągrowiecki PhD
44	National Election Office - Voivodship Office in Poznań Krajowe Biuro Wyborcze Delegatura Wojewódzka w Poznaniu	Pudliszak, Marek	Director
45	AMU, Department of Sociology [Local Government Research Group]	Matczak, Piotr	Researcher on Estate Councils PhD
Additional short interviews			
46	City Hall	City Hall Official 2	Anonymous
47	City Hall	City Hall Official 5	Anonymous
48	NGO	Wojtanowski, Grzegorz	Barka Foundation responsible for EQUAL programme in Poznań and for building local partnerships

E-mail (dated 06.07.2007) from Wojciech Pelc, City Hall, Head of Information Services Unit.

## Appendix 2

For the Tables (1 – 30) user defined missing values were treated as missing. Statistics for each table were based on all the cases with valid data in the specified ranges for all variables in each table.

Categories within the answers to the question “what is the level of education that you have completed so far?” were collapsed and in the result three categories were formulated ‘vocational and lower level of school’, ‘secondary school (including comprehensive and technical)’ and ‘higher education’.

In the categories within the answers to the question “Please give your age range:” the last two possible answers (‘55-64’ and ‘65 and more’) were collapsed and new category was formulated ‘55 and more’.

In the answers to the questions “Did you take part in last presidential/parliamentary/ local government elections?” considered were only answers ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ and answer ‘No, because I was under 18’ was omitted.

The assumption for the Chi-square test of independence stating the independence of observations, that each person was counted only once, they cannot appear in more than one category, and data from one subject cannot influence the data from the other, was executed. The problem occurred with the assumption that the lowest expected frequency in any cell should be 5 or more. Some authors suggest a less stringent criteria that at least 80% of cells should have expected frequencies of 5 or more. However, the formula for Chi-square test of independence yields a statistic that is only approximately a Chi-square distribution. In order for the approximation to be adequate, the total number of subjects should be at least 20 and this assumption was executed in my research. Some authors claim that the correction for continuity should be used whenever an expected cell frequency is bellow 5. Research in statistics has shown that this practice is not advisable (see Bradley, Bradley, McGrath and Cutcomb 1979).

Appendix Table 1 Św. Łazarz Estate Level of education changed \* Participation presidential without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation presidential without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	8	10	18
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	20.0%	38.5%	27.3%
	Secondary School	Count	21	10	31
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	52.5%	38.5%	47.0%
	Higher Education	Count	11	6	17
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	27.5%	23.1%	25.8%
Total		Count	40	26	66
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.750(a)	2	.253
Likelihood Ratio	2.712	2	.258
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.533	1	.216
N of Valid Cases	66		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.70.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.204	.253
Cramer's V	.204	.253
N of Valid Cases	66	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 2 Lawica Estate Level of education changed \* Participation in presidential elections without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation in presidential elections without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	2	0	2
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	3.8%	.0%	3.3%
	Secondary School (including Comprehensive and Technical)	Count	16	4	20
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	30.2%	57.1%	33.3%
	Higher Education	Count	35	3	38
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	66.0%	42.9%	63.3%
Total	Count		53	7	60
	% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18		100.0%	100.0%	100.0 %

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.136(a)	2	.344
Likelihood Ratio	2.221	2	.329
Linear-by-Linear Association	.747	1	.388
N of Valid Cases	60		

a. 4 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .23.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.189	.344
Nominal by Cramer's V	.189	.344
N of Valid Cases	60	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 3 Św. Łazarz Estate Level of education changed \* Participation parliamentary without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation parliamentary without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	7	11	18
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	18.4%	40.7%	27.7%
	Secondary School	Count	20	10	30
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	52.6%	37.0%	46.2%
	Higher Education	Count	11	6	17
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	28.9%	22.2%	26.2%
Total	Count		38	27	65
	% within Participation parliamentary without under 18		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.944(a)	2	.139
Likelihood Ratio	3.916	2	.141
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.436	1	.119
N of Valid Cases	65		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.06.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.246
	Cramer's V	.139
N of Valid Cases	65	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 4 Ławica Estate Level of education changed \* Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	2	0	2
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	3.8%	.0%	3.3%
	Secondary School (including Comprehensive and Technical)	Count	16	5	21
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	30.2%	62.5%	34.4%
	Higher Education	Count	35	3	38
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	66.0%	37.5%	62.3%
Total	Count	53	8	61	
	% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.319(a)	2	.190
Likelihood Ratio	3.361	2	.186
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.364	1	.243
N of Valid Cases	61		

a 4 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .26.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.233	.190
Cramer's V	.233	.190
N of Valid Cases	61	

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.



Appendix Table 5 Św. Łazarz Estate Level of education changed \* Participation local government without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation local government without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	7	11	18
		% within Participation local government without under 18	18.9%	37.9%	27.3%
	Secondary School	Count	21	10	31
		% within Participation local government without under 18	56.8%	34.5%	47.0%
	Higher Education	Count	9	8	17
		% within Participation local government without under 18	24.3%	27.6%	25.8%
Total	Count		37	29	66
	% within Participation local government without under 18		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.939(a)	2	.140
Likelihood Ratio	3.973	2	.137
Linear-by-Linear Association	.749	1	.387
N of Valid Cases	66		

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.47.

## Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.244	.140
	Cramer's V	.244	.140
N of Valid Cases		66	

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 6 Ławica Estate Level of education changed \* Participation in local government elections without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation in local government elections without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	2	0	2
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	4.0%	.0%	3.3%
	Secondary School (including Comprehensive and Technical)	Count	15	6	21
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	30.0%	54.5%	34.4%
	Higher Education	Count	33	5	38
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	66.0%	45.5%	62.3%
Total	Count		50	11	61
	% within Participation in local government elections without under 18		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.629(a)	2	.269
Likelihood Ratio	2.851	2	.240
Linear-by-Linear Association	.790	1	.374
N of Valid Cases	61		

a. 3 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .36.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.208	.269
Cramer's V	.208	.269
N of Valid Cases	61	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 7 Św. Łazarz Estate Age range Changed \* Participation presidential without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation presidential without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	17	9	26
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	42.5%	34.6%	39.4%
	25-34	Count	5	9	14
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	12.5%	34.6%	21.2%
	35-44	Count	1	6	7
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	2.5%	23.1%	10.6%
	45-54	Count	11	0	11
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	27.5%	.0%	16.7%
	55 and more	Count	6	2	8
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	15.0%	7.7%	12.1%
	Total	Count	40	26	66
		% within Participation presidential without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.017(a)	4	.001
Likelihood Ratio	21.973	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.744	1	.187
N of Valid Cases	66		

a. 5 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.76.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.522	.001
Cramer's V	.522	.001
N of Valid Cases	66	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 8 Lawica Estate Age range Changed \* Participation in presidential elections without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation in presidential elections without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	12	2	14
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	22.6%	28.6%	23.3%
	25-34	Count	8	2	10
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	15.1%	28.6%	16.7%
	35-44	Count	1	0	1
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	1.9%	.0%	1.7%
	45-54	Count	19	2	21
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	35.8%	28.6%	35.0%
	55- and more	Count	13	1	14
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	24.5%	14.3%	23.3%
	Total	Count	53	7	60
		% within Participation in presidential elections without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.271(a)	4	.866
Likelihood Ratio	1.323	4	.858
Linear-by-Linear Association	.730	1	.393
N of Valid Cases	60		

a. 6 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .12.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.146	.866
Nominal by Nominal Cramer's V	.146	.866
N of Valid Cases	60	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 9 Św. Łazarz Estate Age range Changed \* Participation parliamentary without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation parliamentary without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	16	9	25
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	42.1%	33.3%	38.5%
	25-34	Count	5	9	14
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	13.2%	33.3%	21.5%
	35-44	Count	1	5	6
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	2.6%	18.5%	9.2%
	45-54	Count	11	0	11
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	28.9%	.0%	16.9%
	55 and more	Count	5	4	9
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	13.2%	14.8%	13.8%
	Total	Count	38	27	65
		% within Participation parliamentary without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.462(a)	4	.004
Likelihood Ratio	19.546	4	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	.568	1	.451
N of Valid Cases	65		

a. 4 cells (40.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.49.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.488	.004
Cramer's V	.488	.004
N of Valid Cases	65	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 10 Ławica Estate Age range Changed \* Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	13	2	15
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	24.5%	25.0%	24.6%
	25-34	Count	7	3	10
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	13.2%	37.5%	16.4%
	35-44	Count	1	0	1
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	1.9%	.0%	1.6%
	45-54	Count	19	2	21
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	35.8%	25.0%	34.4%
	55- and more	Count	13	1	14
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	24.5%	12.5%	23.0%
	Total	Count	53	8	61
		% within Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.330(a)	4	.504
Likelihood Ratio	2.993	4	.559
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.036	1	.309
N of Valid Cases	61		

a. 6 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .13.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.234	.504
Cramer's V	.234	.504
N of Valid Cases	61	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 11 Św. Łazarz Estate Age range Changed \* Participation local government without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation local government without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	17	9	26
		% within Participation local government without under 18	45.9%	31.0%	39.4%
	25-34	Count	3	11	14
		% within Participation local government without under 18	8.1%	37.9%	21.2%
	35-44	Count	1	6	7
		% within Participation local government without under 18	2.7%	20.7%	10.6%
	45-54	Count	11	0	11
		% within Participation local government without under 18	29.7%	.0%	16.7%
	55 and more	Count	5	3	8
		% within Participation local government without under 18	13.5%	10.3%	12.1%
	Total	Count	37	29	66
		% within Participation local government without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.450(a)	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	26.107	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.996	1	.318
N of Valid Cases	66		

a. 5 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.08.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.570	.000
Nominal by Nominal Cramer's V	.570	.000
N of Valid Cases	66	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 12 Ławica Estate Age range Changed \* Participation in local government elections without under 18 Crosstabulation

			Participation in local government elections without under 18		Total
			Yes	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	13	2	15
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	26.0%	18.2%	24.6%
	25-34	Count	5	5	10
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	10.0%	45.5%	16.4%
	35-44	Count	1	0	1
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	2.0%	.0%	1.6%
	45-54	Count	19	2	21
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	38.0%	18.2%	34.4%
	55- and more	Count	12	2	14
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	24.0%	18.2%	23.0%
	Total	Count	50	11	61
		% within Participation in local government elections without under 18	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.519(a)	4	.074
Likelihood Ratio	7.236	4	.124
Linear-by-Linear Association	.976	1	.323
N of Valid Cases	61		

a. 6 cells (60.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .18.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.374	.074
Nominal by Cramer's V	.374	.074
N of Valid Cases	61	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.



Appendix Table 13 Św. Łazarz Estate Participation presidential without under 18 \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Participation presidential without under 18	Yes	Count	4	8	15	13	40
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	50.0%	66.7%	57.7%	65.0%	60.6%
	No	Count	4	4	11	7	26
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	50.0%	33.3%	42.3%	35.0%	39.4%
Total	Count		8	12	26	20	66
	% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.816(a)	3	.846
Likelihood Ratio	.813	3	.846
Linear-by-Linear Association	.224	1	.636
N of Valid Cases	66		

a. 3 cells (37.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.15.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.111	.846
Cramer's V	.111	.846
N of Valid Cases	66	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 14 Ławica Estate Participation in presidential elections without under 18 \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Participation in presidential elections without under 18	Yes	Count	4	18	18	13	53
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	100.0%	94.7%	90.0%	76.5%	88.3%
	No	Count	0	1	2	4	7
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	.0%	5.3%	10.0%	23.5%	11.7%
Total		Count	4	19	20	17	60
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.660(a)	3	.301
Likelihood Ratio	3.839	3	.279
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.291	1	.070
N of Valid Cases	60		

a. 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .47.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.247	.301
Cramer's V	.247	.301
N of Valid Cases	60	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 15 Św. Łazarz Estate Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18 \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Participation parliamentary without under 18	Yes	Count	6	7	14	11	38
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	66.7%	58.3%	56.0%	57.9%	58.5%
	No	Count	3	5	11	8	27
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	33.3%	41.7%	44.0%	42.1%	41.5%
Total	Count		9	12	25	19	65
	% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.314(a)	3	.957
Likelihood Ratio	.320	3	.956
Linear-by-Linear Association	.153	1	.695
N of Valid Cases	65		

a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.74.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.070	.957
Nominal by Cramer's V	.070	.957
N of Valid Cases	65	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 16 Ławica Estate Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18 \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Participation in parliamentary elections without under 18	Yes	Count	4	19	17	13	53
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	100.0%	95.0%	85.0%	76.5%	86.9%
	No	Count	0	1	3	4	8
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	.0%	5.0%	15.0%	23.5%	13.1%
Total		Count	4	20	20	17	61
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.440(a)	3	.329
Likelihood Ratio	4.005	3	.261
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.340	1	.068
N of Valid Cases	61		

a. 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .52.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.237	.329
Cramer's V	.237	.329
N of Valid Cases	61	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 17 Św. Łazarz Estate Participation in local government elections without under 18 \* Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Participation in local government elections without under 18	Yes	Count	9	10	14	4	37
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	52.9%	47.6%	70.0%	50.0%	56.1%
	No	Count	8	11	6	4	29
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	47.1%	52.4%	30.0%	50.0%	43.9%
Total		Count	17	21	20	8	66
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.372(a)	3	.499
Likelihood Ratio	2.426	3	.489
Linear-by-Linear Association	.347	1	.556
N of Valid Cases	66		

a. 2 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.52.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.190	.499
Cramer's V	.190	.499
N of Valid Cases	66	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 18 Ławica Estate Participation in local government elections without under 18 \* Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Participation in local government elections without under 18	Yes	Count	12	21	14	3	50
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	80.0%	87.5%	82.4%	60.0%	82.0%
	No	Count	3	3	3	2	11
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	20.0%	12.5%	17.6%	40.0%	18.0%
Total		Count	15	24	17	5	61
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.170(a)	3	.538
Likelihood Ratio	1.899	3	.594
Linear-by-Linear Association	.452	1	.501
N of Valid Cases	61		

a. 5 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .90.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.189	.538
Cramer's V	.189	.538
N of Valid Cases	61	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 19 Św. Łazarz Estate Age range Changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	4	4	13	6	27
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	44.4%	33.3%	50.0%	28.6%	39.7%
	25-34	Count	1	3	6	4	14
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	11.1%	25.0%	23.1%	19.0%	20.6%
	35-44	Count	1	2	1	3	7
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	11.1%	16.7%	3.8%	14.3%	10.3%
	45-54	Count	1	3	4	3	11
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	11.1%	25.0%	15.4%	14.3%	16.2%
	55 and more	Count	2	0	2	5	9
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	22.2%	.0%	7.7%	23.8%	13.2%
	Total	Count	9	12	26	21	68
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.278(a)	12	.679
Likelihood Ratio	10.790	12	.547
Linear-by-Linear Association	.414	1	.520
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 17 cells (85.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .93.

## Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.369	.679
	Cramer's V	.213	.679
N of Valid Cases		68	

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 20 Ławica Estate Age range Changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?  
Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	1	8	4	3	16
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	25.0%	40.0%	19.0%	17.6%	25.8%
	25-34	Count	1	2	3	4	10
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	25.0%	10.0%	14.3%	23.5%	16.1%
	35-44	Count	0	1	0	0	1
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	.0%	5.0%	.0%	.0%	1.6%
	45-54	Count	2	4	11	4	21
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	50.0%	20.0%	52.4%	23.5%	33.9%
	55- and more	Count	0	5	3	6	14
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	.0%	25.0%	14.3%	35.3%	22.6%
Total	Count		4	20	21	17	62
	% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.671(a)	12	.393
Likelihood Ratio	13.410	12	.340
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.395	1	.238
N of Valid Cases	62		

a. 15 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.452	.393
Cramer's V	.261	.393
N of Valid Cases	62	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 21 Św. Łazarz Age range Changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	6	9	11	1	27
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	33.3%	42.9%	52.4%	12.5%	39.7%
	25-34	Count	7	6	0	1	14
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	38.9%	28.6%	.0%	12.5%	20.6%
	35-44	Count	2	0	3	2	7
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	11.1%	.0%	14.3%	25.0%	10.3%
	45-54	Count	2	3	5	1	11
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	11.1%	14.3%	23.8%	12.5%	16.2%
	55 and more	Count	1	3	2	3	9
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	5.6%	14.3%	9.5%	37.5%	13.2%
Total	Count		18	21	21	8	68
	% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.665(a)	12	.056
Likelihood Ratio	25.474	12	.013
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.037	1	.081
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 17 cells (85.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .82.

## Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.551	.056
	Cramer's V	.318	.056
N of Valid Cases		68	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 22 Ławica Estate Age range Changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Age range Changed	18-24	Count	3	6	7	0	16
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	20.0%	25.0%	38.9%	.0%	25.8%
	25-34	Count	3	4	2	1	10
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	20.0%	16.7%	11.1%	20.0%	16.1%
	35-44	Count	1	0	0	0	1
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	6.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	1.6%
	45-54	Count	7	8	3	3	21
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	46.7%	33.3%	16.7%	60.0%	33.9%
	55- and more	Count	1	6	6	1	14
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	6.7%	25.0%	33.3%	20.0%	22.6%
Total	Count		15	24	18	5	62
	% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.279(a)	12	.424
Likelihood Ratio	13.780	12	.315
Linear-by-Linear Association	.247	1	.619
N of Valid Cases	62		

a. 15 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .08.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal      Phi	.445	.424
Cramer's V	.257	.424
N of Valid Cases	62	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 23 Św. Łazarz Estate Level of education changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	4	3	6	7	20
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	44.4%	25.0%	23.1%	33.3%	29.4%
	Secondary School	Count	3	4	14	10	31
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	33.3%	33.3%	53.8%	47.6%	45.6%
	Higher Education	Count	2	5	6	4	17
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	22.2%	41.7%	23.1%	19.0%	25.0%
Total	Count		9	12	26	21	68
	% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4.032(a)	6	.672
Likelihood Ratio	3.820	6	.701
Linear-by-Linear Association	.052	1	.819
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 5 cells (41.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.25.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal      Phi	.244	.672
Cramer's V	.172	.672
N of Valid Cases	68	

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 24 Ławica Estate Level of education changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the national state? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	0	0	2	0	2
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	.0%	.0%	9.5%	.0%	3.2%
	Secondary School (including Comprehensive and Technical)	Count	1	6	10	5	22
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	25.0%	30.0%	47.6%	29.4%	35.5%
	Higher Education	Count	3	14	9	12	38
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	75.0%	70.0%	42.9%	70.6%	61.3%
	Total	Count	4	20	21	17	62
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the national state?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.021(a)	6	.319
Likelihood Ratio	7.504	6	.277
Linear-by-Linear Association	.163	1	.687
N of Valid Cases	62		

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .13.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi	.337	.319
Cramer's V	.238	.319
N of Valid Cases	62	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 25 Św. Łazarz Estate Level of education changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?  
Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
Level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	8	4	7	1	20
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	44.4%	19.0%	33.3%	12.5%	29.4%
	Secondary School	Count	8	10	10	3	31
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	44.4%	47.6%	47.6%	37.5%	45.6%
	Higher Education	Count	2	7	4	4	17
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	11.1%	33.3%	19.0%	50.0%	25.0%
	Total	Count	18	21	21	8	68
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.466(a)	6	.280
Likelihood Ratio	7.489	6	.278
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.678	1	.102
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 4 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal      Phi	.331	.280
Cramer's V	.234	.280
N of Valid Cases	68	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.



Appendix Table 26 Lawica Estate Level of education changed \* Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters? Crosstabulation

			Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?				Total
			Yes	Probably	Probably not	No	Yes
level of education changed	Vocational and lower level School	Count	0	1	1	0	2
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	.0%	4.2%	5.6%	.0%	3.2%
	Secondary School (including Comprehensive and Technical)	Count	5	9	7	1	22
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	33.3%	37.5%	38.9%	20.0%	35.5%
	Higher Education	Count	10	14	10	4	38
		% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	66.7%	58.3%	55.6%	80.0%	61.3%
Total	Count		15	24	18	5	62
	% within Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.945(a)	6	.925
Likelihood Ratio	2.568	6	.861
Linear-by-Linear Association	.019	1	.890
N of Valid Cases	62		

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .16.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.177	.925
Nominal by Cramer's V	.125	.925
N of Valid Cases	62	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 27 Mann-Whitney Test for differences between Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates on the effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań

Ranks

	Estate	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań	Św. Łazarz	67	66.49	4454.50
	Ławica	60	61.23	3673.50
	Total	127		

Test Statistics(a)

	Effectiveness of the Mayor of Poznań
Mann-Whitney U	1843.500
Wilcoxon W	3673.500
Z	-.845
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.398

a Grouping Variable: Estate

Appendix Table 28 Mann-Whitney Test for differences between Św. Łazarz and Ławica Estates on the effectiveness of the City of Poznań Council

Ranks

	Estate1	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Effectiveness of the City Council	Św. Łazarz	67	68.34	4579.00
	Ławica	61	60.28	3677.00
	Total	128		

Test Statistics(a)

	Effectiveness of the City Council
Mann-Whitney U	1786.000
Wilcoxon W	3677.000
Z	-1.305
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.192

a Grouping Variable: Estate1

Appendix Table 29 Św. Łazarz Estate Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council? \*  
Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters? Crosstabulation

			Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?				Total
			Yes. to a large extent	Rather yes	Rather not	No. I am not receiving them at all	Yes. to a large extent
Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	Yes	Count	5	11	0	2	18
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	45.5%	34.4%	.0%	13.3%	26.5%
	Probably	Count	5	11	2	3	21
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	45.5%	34.4%	20.0%	20.0%	30.9%
	Probably not	Count	1	8	5	7	21
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	9.1%	25.0%	50.0%	46.7%	30.9%
	No	Count	0	2	3	3	8
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	.0%	6.3%	30.0%	20.0%	11.8%
	Total	Count	11	32	10	15	68
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	17.976(a)	9	.035
Likelihood Ratio	21.332	9	.011
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.409	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	68		

a. 13 cells (81.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.18.

## Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal      Phi	.514	.035
Cramer's V	.297	.035
N of Valid Cases	68	

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Appendix Table 30 Ławica Estate Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council? \*  
Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters? Crosstabulation

			Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?				Total
			Yes. to a large extent	Rather yes	Rather not	No. I am not receiving them at all	Yes. to a large extent
Can citizens influence decisions of the city matters?	Yes	Count	3	5	3	4	15
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	42.9%	22.7%	15.0%	30.8%	24.2%
	Probably	Count	3	11	6	4	24
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	42.9%	50.0%	30.0%	30.8%	38.7%
	Probably not	Count	0	5	9	4	18
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	.0%	22.7%	45.0%	30.8%	29.0%
	No	Count	1	1	2	1	5
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	14.3%	4.5%	10.0%	7.7%	8.1%
	Total	Count	7	22	20	13	62
		% within Do you usually receive announcements and information from the Estate council?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.190(a)	9	.515
Likelihood Ratio	9.875	9	.361
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.037	1	.309
N of Valid Cases	62		

a. 10 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .56.

## .Symmetric Measures

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Phi	.363	.515
Nominal Cramer's V	.210	.515
N of Valid Cases	62	

a Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

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