

**The functioning and transformations of a small office of public administration in
a rural commune in the light of development challenges and local conditions -
model recommendations for improving the functioning of a small office
in the commune**

Author: Beata Potemska

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The aim of the dissertation is to make an attempt at elaborating a reference model of office management in rural commune.

25 years passed in March 2015 since the adoption by the Polish Parliament of the act reinstating the local self-government in Poland. It has become a permanent part of the economic, political and legal system of our country. The local self - government, in its present form, does not perform the tasks to which it had been appointed sufficiently. The rationality of its functioning in a changing environment, facing new development challenges and deep social, economic and legal transformations is being questioned.

The way of management of the office in local self-government plays a crucial role in the functioning of a local self-government unit. An effective office affects each fields of local self-government unit and determines the rationality of its existence and development. Regrettably, the majority of small offices in rural communes, do not undertake strategic actions targeted at solving structural problems and generating socio-economic recovery. The traditional practices originating from the times that passed paralyse the work of the small offices in rural communes and in consequence, they negatively impact the development of the local self-government unit and the increase of contentment of its inhabitants.

Introduction of systemic solutions into the governing of small office in rural commune is indispensable for ensuring an effective development and fulfilment of the tasks to which the local self-government was appointed. Dynamic transformations enforce, both on the local officers and local authorities to face many challenges and make difficult decisions. In order to ensure sustainable development they require efficient tools, enabling them to undertake actions aimed at streamlining of the organizational structures and thereby facilitate the process of office management.

Regrettably, the majority of small offices in rural communes fail to fulfil the development function.

One of the offices in a rural commune has been chosen as the research area. The author focused on a single office and joined its structure because she was determined to obtain the authentic picture of a small office in rural commune. In this way it became possible to analyse the real methods of managing the small office and functioning each fields of local self-government unit. Even the reports of the Supreme Chamber of Control or the Regional Accounting Chambers do not reflect the real situation of the small offices. The analysis of these documents has led to the conclusion that the inspections carried out by these institutions are not holistic in character - they rather pertain to specific issues. On top of that, the Supreme Chamber of Control selects the offices of local self-government randomly and investigates a given problem, not having distinguished between large and small office. It is the author's opinion that a similar effect would be achieved through analysing a few dozen of small offices in rural communes basing on surveys or interviews with the local authorities or the office's employees assigned by them. The data obtained in this way would lead to create of a distorted picture of the investigated office, i.e. not the authentic but the desired one. The direct participation in the life of the analysed office allowed to make ongoing decisions and to observe both inhabitant's and local officer's, local authority's reaction. Additionally, a detailed analysis of a source literature and a lot of regulations, acts and another documents, formulating both at the local and central level, contributed to obtain even more authentic picture of the researched office. It is only through applying this method the acquisition of detailed and comprehensive information on the condition of a small office became attainable. It is also made it possible to undertake adequate remedies and elaborate a reference model of managing this office.

The chapter one provides the informations on the transformation of the self-government (both in Poland and other European countries) and shows the role of the office of local self government in the contemporary world. The chapter two presents the most widely-recognized (both traditional and modern) conceptions of management in the private and public sector. The first part of chapter three consists of a description of traditional methods of management that the author witnessed in the small office in rural commune. It points to a number of irregularities that determine the low quality and inefficiency of its functioning. The second part of chapter three offers solutions, which if implemented would impact the efficiency of the work of the small office and increase

the quality of its functioning and thereby increase the quality of functioning of local self-government unit. The chapter four includes recommendations on the implementation of changes into the management of a small office in rural commune.

The implementation of the reference model creates the opportunity to increase the quality and efficiency of the functioning of the small office in rural commune and to remedy the lowest level of self-government, i.e. the commune. Therefore the end of the dissertation includes the recommendation for the Ministry to implement and verify the reference model.