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***Differences in fulfilling the entitlement  
to pre-school education in Masovian voivodship –  
in search of political conditions  
of local social citizenship***

***Summary***

In the present paper, we analyse the differences in the use of pre-school education from the point of view of local social citizenship theory. Adopting this perspective means that, the level of diffusion of pre-school education reflects the level of entitlement to this type of education, an ingredient of the “social element of citizenship”. Thus, in accordance with Marshall and his followers, we consider social citizenship most of all as a political phenomenon. Considering both economic (labour market conditions) and cultural (commune type: village vs. town) conditioning of local demand for pre-school education services, we shall concentrate on analysing local, political conditions of fulfilling the entitlement to this type of education. We shall also test the hypothesis, widespread in hitherto literature on the subject, of the basic difference factor for the participation in pre-school education being the commune’s own income *per capita*. In the present paper, we demonstrate that the difference in political

activity of the inhabitants of communes, measured by local turnout (in parliamentary elections) is correlated to the level of fulfilment of pre-school education entitlement to a much higher extent than the differences between the commune's own income *per capita*. The present paper demonstrates the results of the first stage of analysis of the political conditions of local social citizenship within the "Local social citizenship in social policy: the example of care services for children under 5"<sup>1</sup>.

**Key words:** local social citizenship, participation in pre-school education, political participation

## *Introduction*

The differences in participation in pre-school education on the local level in Poland are fairly well-described in the literature on the subject (Dziemianowicz-Bąk 2012, Federowicz 2011, Marchlewski 2011, Swianiewicz 2012). However, the analyses hitherto were most of all focused on describing the differentiation by geographical factors and to some extent were they conducted in the framework of social policy theories. The analyses hitherto have also seldom applied formal methods of analysis of dependence between potential explanatory factors and the participation in pre-school education. As a result, the hitherto hypotheses on the causes of differences in the participation in pre-school education on the local level were fairly general and did not relate to the structured concept of conditions of this participation. They were by-and-large limited to seeking explanations in differences in the income of communes<sup>2</sup> (wealth of commune) and cultural factors, derived from the differences in types of communes and their location (e.g. urban/rural/suburban; communes in Eastern and Western Poland; cf. e. g. Swianiewicz 2012, Marchlewski 2011, Szlendak 2003). In the present paper, we analyse the differences in the use of pre-school education from the point of view of local social citizenship theory.<sup>3</sup> Adopting this perspective means that to us, the level of participation in pre-school education reflects the level of entitlement to this type of education. Drawing on the concept created by T. Marshall (1950), the child's right to pre-school education shall be treated as a part of "social element of citizenship". The share of children aged 3 to 5 in a particular

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<sup>1</sup> M. Theiss, PhD., "Local social citizenship in social policy: the example of care services for children under 5", funded within the NCN (SONATA) grant, contract no.: 2011/03/D/HS5/02498.

<sup>2</sup> A commune is the principal unit of three-stage administrative division of Poland at its lowest uniform level. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, each commune performs public tasks in its territory, for the benefit of its residents, c.f. Act on Gmina Self-government, dated 8.3.1990 (Journal of Laws 2001, 2001 No. 142, item 1591 with later amendments).

<sup>3</sup> More on the concept of local social citizenship: M. Theiss, in the volume herein. Here, we would only like to note that the said concept considers differences and inequalities in using social social entitlements, including services in particular, on a local level.

commune attending pre-school is therefore to us a sign of social citizenship, thus, to what extent local social policy supports its residents in the use of social services.

In accordance with the Marshallian tradition of research, we consider social citizenship most of all a political phenomenon. This means that our research on conditions of pre-school education constitutes a part of a wider trend, which may be collectively tagged as “politics matter”. Among numerous policy explanations, it also includes concepts on the role of: social mobilisation (Korpi 83), political affiliation of local authorities (commune council and/or the executive branch) (Boyne, Hoggart), political participation of the habitants (Putnam), or local democracy, which the authors set as the reason for the differences in *policy performance* of local self-governments, including, among others, services for families and children. The latter trend collectively points to the importance of political factors, such as the institutional structure of local self-government and its links to regional and central institutions in the country, as well as party membership of the local elite and the patterns of political rivalry in a given local community (c f. e. g. Lankina, Hudalla and Wolmann 2008; Rossteutscher 2005).

In the present paper, we ask the question on the relationship between the active citizenship of the residents, that is, the so-called “active dimension of citizenship” (Turner, Stoker) and its “passive”, “social” dimension (Heywood). Active citizenship, possibly resulting in greater accessibility to pre-school education, is expressed with the turnout in parliamentary elections, as well as with saturation of the communes with non-governmental organisations, whereby, as described further, the choice of indices is partially prompted by their accessibility on the level of communes. In the present paper, we demonstrate that the difference in political activity of the residents of communes, measured by local turnout (in parliamentary elections) is correlated to the level of fulfilment of pre-school education entitlement to a much higher extent than the differences between the commune’s own *per capita* income (which reflects the financial means of a commune in enabling its residents with pre-school education). The present paper demonstrates the results of initial quantitative analyses, assumed as the basis for further qualitative research within the “Local social citizenship in social policy: the example of care services for children under 5” research project.

The study described in the present paper comprised all communes<sup>4</sup> and cities with poviats rights in the central region of Poland, the Masovian voivodship, including the country’s capital - Warsaw. This voivodship varies greatly in economic development and as a result, in the level of wealth of the residents of particular communes and cities with poviats rights. Data sources:

- 1) Local Data Bank (Central Statistical Office) - for reference in population sizes in communes according to yearbooks (as of 2013) and contextual data on labour market trends in a particular commune,

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<sup>4</sup> The Masovian voivodship comprises 314 communes (including 35 urban communes, 50 urban-rural communes and 229 rural communes, as well as 5 cities with poviats rights).

- 2) Education Information System (EIS) - for reference in the number of pre-primary education establishments, their types, their governing authorities and the number of children attending various types of pre-primary education establishments and the time spent by children in these establishments.
- 3) The National Electoral Commission for reference in variables on voter turnout<sup>5</sup>.

In the first chapter of this article, we describe the historical and legal context of the layout of pre-primary education in Poland. Secondly (in Part 2) we demonstrate the differences in the participation in pre-primary education (provided by nursery schools, pre-primary education groups and pre-primary sections of primary schools) in the communes in Masovian voivodeship. The analyses takes into account the level of participation in part-time and full-time pre-primary education (children spending up to 5 hours, and over 5 hours in the establishment, respectively), also singling out the age group of 5-year-olds (subject to compulsory pre-primary education in accordance with the Act on the Education System, article 14, item 3; Journal of Laws 2004, No. 256, item 2572 with later amendments), also taking into account the division into public/non-public establishments. In the third part, we demonstrate that it is of vital importance to analyse the difference factors in fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education taking into account the possible reasons for different demand for these services. We have also shown the initial results of dependencies between (a) the commune's own income and (b) political activity and active citizenship of the residents of the commune and the level of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary care on the local level, within two groups with uniform demand for those services.

### ***The historical and legal context of the scheme of pre-primary education in Poland***

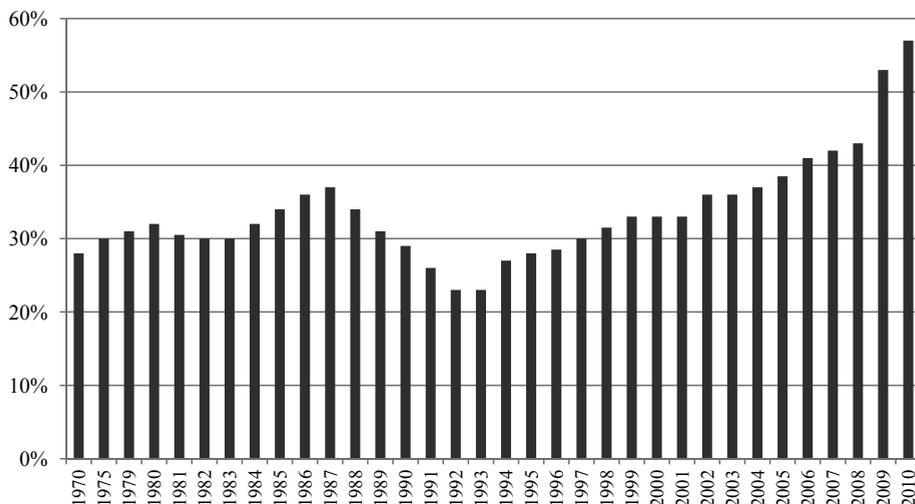
The political transition in Poland has left a strong mark on the scheme of pre-primary education. Until 1989, care establishments for children were maintained by local government authorities<sup>6</sup>, state-or cooperative-owned employment establishments, state-approved social organizations and some ministries. The level of participation in pre-primary education, measured with the percentage of children aged 3-5, attending pre-primary education institutions between 1970 and 1988 oscillated between 28 and 37% (Figure 1).

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<sup>5</sup> We would like to thank the Masovian Education Superintendent and "Moja Polis" website ([www.mojapolis.pl](http://www.mojapolis.pl)) for enabling access to data in points 2 and 3.

<sup>6</sup> Public administration is a set of actions, proceedings and undertakings (managerial and executive), undertaken for public interest by various entities, organs and institutions pursuant to the Act and within the legal framework; its organs comprise bodies and persons on state- and self-governmental level. Until 1989, local government duties were performed by the National Councils, dependent on the state authorities and implementing their policy on the local level, cf. Izdebski H., M. Kulesza (2004).

**Figure 1. Level of enrolment in pre-primary education establishments in the age-group 3-5, 1970 – 2010.**



Source: own work, based on Federowicz 2011:40.

Source: own work, based on Federowicz 2011:40.

The political and economic transition in 1989 resulted in, among others, an increase in unemployment rate among women, fewer financial resources allocated to cover the high costs of operation for many education and care establishments, and a different approach to their to-date social functions. As a result, many pre-primary care establishments were liquidated, especially in rural areas (Marchlewski 2011:13), which still results in large inter-communal differences in the access to care establishments. The Act of 8 March 1990 on Commune Self-Government moved the responsibility for public education onto the local self-government (maintaining nursery schools and other schools are the so-called “the commune’s own tasks”. Local self-government entities are most of all bound to, among others, to individually establish the network of public nursery schools, organize and promote pre-primary education (Article 5, item 5; Journal of Laws 2004, No. 256, item 2572 with later amendments, cf. Also Dziemianowicz - Bąk, Bochno 2012: 7). The accession to the EU in 2004 pronounced the poor state of pre-primary care in Poland: when compared to other countries, Poland had, and still has, a considerably lower rate of participation in pre-primary education by children aged 3-5. The current EU strategy (Europe 2020) sets the minimal benchmark of participation in early childhood education at at least 95% of children between the age of four and up. It was reflected in an obligatory one-year pre-primary school preparation period in nursery schools, pre-primary sections of primary schools or other forms of pre-primary education introduced in Poland in 2011 (from 2009, it was a right of the citizens) and applicable to children aged 5 (Article 14, item 3; Journal of Laws 2004, No. 256, item 2572 with later amendments;cf. also

Federowicz 2011:42). Another action to increase the availability of pre-primary services was the implementation of new forms of pre-primary education: pre-primary education groups and pre-primary points by the Ordinance of the Minister of National Education in 2010.<sup>7</sup> These establishments operate on the basis of fewer hours a day than nursery schools, but operate on the same core curriculum. Establishing these institutions contributed to the rise of the level of use of childcare services for children under 5, especially in rural areas, where the percentage in question has risen from less than 30% to over 50% in the period from 2009 to 2012. On average, 72% percent of children aged 3-5 were subject to pre-primary education in the last school year.

### ***The differences in participation in pre-school education on the local level in Poland***

The conditions briefly sketched out above contribute to the ongoing strong spatial differences in increasing participation in pre-primary education on the level of communes. The current analyses (*Justification...* 2012, p. 3, also cf. Swianiewicz 2013, p. 13 ff.) demonstrate difference between rural areas (where 52.1% of children aged 3-5 were attending pre-primary education establishments in the year 2011/2012) and urban areas (where the respective ratio amounts to 86.3%), while both categories are highly varied internally. Thus, the level of participation in pre-primary education in the largest cities, which form The Union of Polish Metropolises is 91%, while in the remaining cities with poviats rights, it amounts to 81%. So as to rural communes, the current state is different in post-State Agricultural Farm communes, where the percentage of children attending nursery schools or other pre-primary education institutions does not reach 50%, and in post-industrial communes, where just over 60% of children are subject to pre-primary education (Swianiewicz 2012:19).<sup>8</sup>

There are strong differences in, among others, the level of participation in pre-primary education for over 5 hours a day (under 5 hours, pre-primary education is generally free in public nursery schools<sup>9</sup>). In the smallest rural communes (up to 5,000

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Ordinance of the Minister of National Education of 31 August 2010 on other forms of pre-school care, the conditions of establishing and organising these forms and their operation, Journal of Laws 2010, No. 161, item 1080.

<sup>8</sup> The “post-State Agricultural Farm communes” are the communes which, in the People’s Republic of Poland, were centred around the State Agricultural Farms (Polish: Państwowe Gospodarstwo Rolne, PGR, often abbreviated as “pegeer” in Polish): a specific form of ownership of agricultural land by the government. The closing down of the State Agricultural Farms in 1991-1993 led to a considerable reduction or a complete liquidation of workplaces and the accompanying educational establishments (nursery schools and schools) and disintegration of the social life. Apart from that, cutting the transport links between the communes and other centres made it highly difficult for the residents to adapt to the changed socio-economic situation.

<sup>9</sup> In correspondence with Article 6 of the Act on the Education System, 5 hours a day in public nursery schools are assigned to the core curriculum and are free of charge. The com-

residents), half of children ages 3-5 attends any establishment of pre-primary education, and two-thirds of the children (66%) stay there up to 5 hours a day). Among rural communes, the latter figure significantly diminishes as the size of community increases, being generally lower urban-rural communes than in rural communes (cf. Table 1.). This remark is confirmed by analyses on how the children are provided with meals in pre-primary establishments: in rural areas, the prevailing group of children (49%) is provided with two meals, while in urban areas, the prevailing majority of children (74%) have three meals (Federowicz 2011:215).

**Table 1. Level of participation of children ages 3-5 in pre-primary education in Poland and the percentage of nursery schoolchildren staying in communal nursery schools up to 5 hours, by type and size of self-governments (school year 2011/2012)**

Commune type	Level of participation in pre-primary education for children ages 3-5	The percentage of children staying in communal nursery schools up to 5 hours among children attending communal nursery schools
Rural commune up to 5,000 residents	50%	66%
Rural commune over 5,000 - up to 7,000 residents	54%	63%
Rural commune over 7,000 residents	59%	56%
Rural-urban commune up to 5,000 residents	55%	53%
Urban-rural commune over 5,000 - up to 7,000 residents	60%	56%
Urban-rural commune over 12,000 residents	71%	43%
Urban commune up to 5,000 residents	76%	39%
Urban commune over 5,000 - up 22,000 residents	78%	29%
Urban commune over 22,000 residents	80%	26%
Cities with poviats rights, without 12 cities forming the Union of Polish Metropolises	81%	27%
Cities forming the Union of Polish Metropolises	91%	17%
<b>Poland in total</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>39%</b>

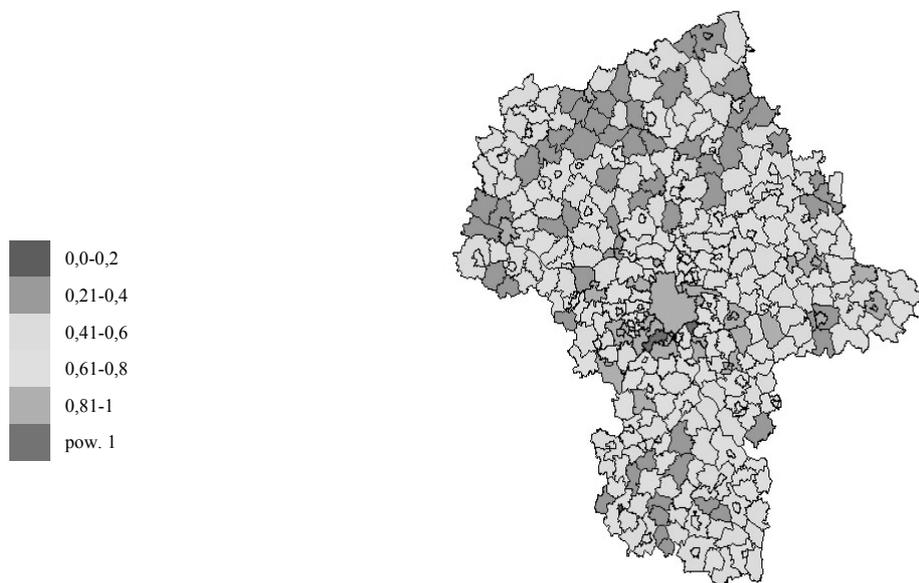
Source: The justification of the bill to amend the Education System Act and amending certain other acts, the Public Information Bulletin of the Ministry of National Education.

munies adopt charges for the 6th and the following hours of the child's stay in the nursery school. These charges differ in Poland, varying from PLN 0 to over PLN 3 per hour (Swianiewicz 2012: 110).

In the Masovian voivodship, which is the subject of latter analyses in this text, even larger discrepancies between communes can be observed. The span of the participation in pre-primary education indicator is nearly 100%, which means that in the communes where the phenomenon in question is the “weakest”, 20% of children are attending pre-primary education establishments (for example, Szydłowo) while attaining 117% in the “strongest” ones (Józefów). The indicator surpasses 100% when there are more children enrolled in the pre-primary education establishments in a given commune than the actual number of children of the appropriate age in a given commune. It probably means that the parents drive their pre-primary school-children from other (neighbouring) communes. This might be a result of a lack of appropriate accessibility to pre-primary education in the place of residence, but also of convenience for people working in a commune other than the one where they live. Another explanation is that some residents of a given commune are not actually registered for permanent residence there.

The highest level of participation in pre-primary education in the Masovian voivodship is observed in the suburban communes of Warsaw agglomeration and in the capital itself, yet also in other cities with powiat rights (e.g. Płock or Siedlce). The further from the central belt of the voivodship, the lower the average indicator value for communes, both when moving to the north and south of the analysed area (fig. 1). More importantly, no significantly lower value of the indicator was observed in the eastern part of the voivodship, considered a part of the so-called eastern wall, a poorer

**Figure 1. Level of participation in pre-primary education in the Masovian voivodship**

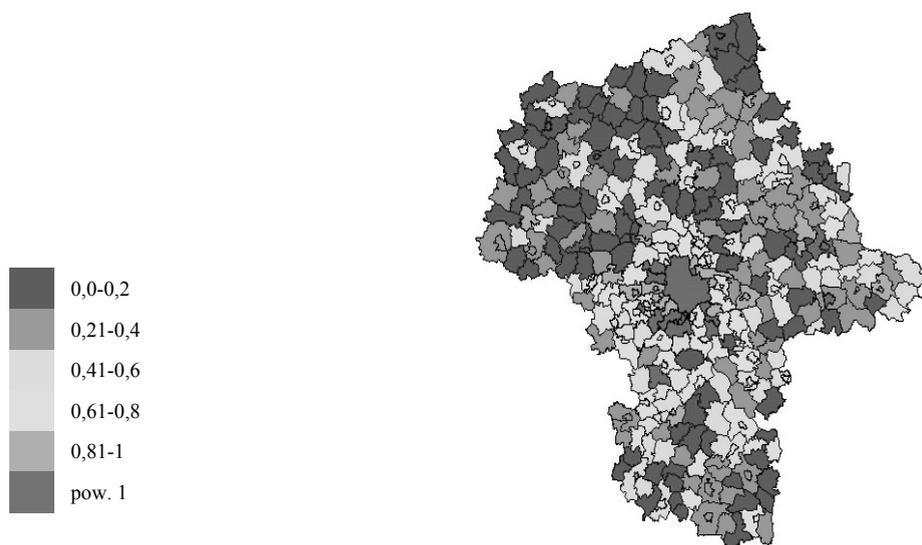


Source: own work, based on the CSO and EIS data.

region of Poland. Apart from a few communes adjoining Siedlce (which might be affected by the aforementioned phenomenon of driving children to establishments in neighbouring communes), the percentage of children attending pre-primary establishments is close to the one observed in communes close to Warsaw, including rural ones (for example, Mrozy).

Typically agricultural areas (Maków and Grójec poviats) visible on the map as yellow-orange parts in the respective northern and southern part of the voivodship, have a distinguishably lower level of participation in pre-primary education, especially its full-time services (Fig. 2). Employment in agriculture and probable access to informal care (multi-generational families) result in very low percentages of children staying in care establishments for over 5 hours. In many communes in the Masovian voivodship (28 out of 364 communes analysed), this percentage equals 0%, which means that all children attending nursery schools are collected after 5 hours maximum. For the second group of communes (121 communes, constituting 1/3 of all communes in the voivodship), with a prevalent number of rural communes, the indicator does not surpass 30%, with the median value at 42%. It is worth noting that rural communes located close to cities have their particularities. The average “full-time” participation in pre-primary education indicator in these communes attains nearly 50%. On the other hand, the result for Warsaw and its environs (Stare Babice, Milanówek, Ząbki) surpass 100%. The level of fulfilment of pre-school education entitlement of over 5 hours is the strongest difference factor for communes in the Masovian voivodship.

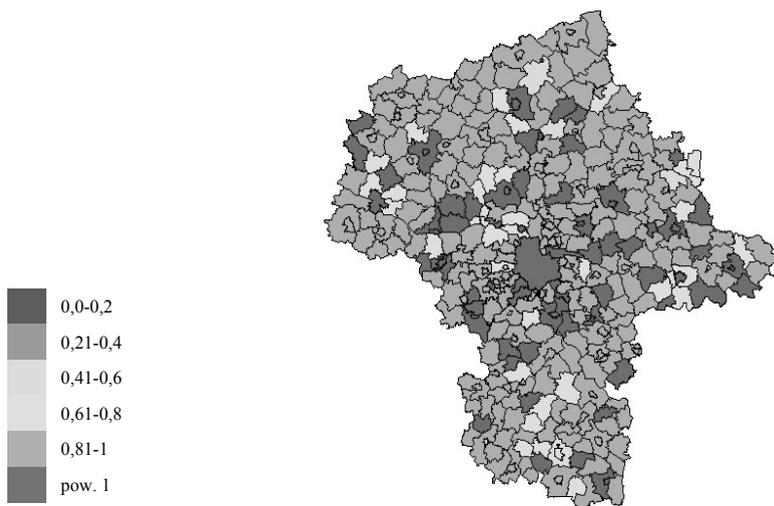
**Figure 2. The share of children staying in pre-primary education establishments for over 5 hours a day in the Masovian voivodship**



Source: own work, based on the CSO and EIS data.

The reasons for not fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education includes the side of supply, such as lack of establishments, and demand: parents' reluctance towards the forms of institutional care for children aged 3-5, or lack of need of such care thanks to access to informal types of care (help from family members, in particular, the child's grandmother; cf. Marchlewski 2011: 27, Swianiewicz 2012: 30). However, since 2011, both communes (ie. school headmasters as their representatives) and parents are obliged to provide an obligatory 1 year pre-primary education to children at the age of 5, so the child attends a nursery school (or a pre-school section of a school, the so-called "zero grade") before starting primary school. Despite the statutory obligation, in 288 communes out of 365 researched ones, the percentage is lower than 100% (Fig. 3). The indicator reaches the lowest values in the southern part of the studied area (Jedlińsk, Przyłęk, Rzecznów), and the highest values - in Warsaw and its surroundings. The differences in participation in pre-primary care are the smallest for this indicator: for rural communes, the average is approx. 90%, higher than in rural, suburban communes (84%), which is an exception. Although it might be supposed that these values are the result of children attending nursery schools outside their place of residence, as well as of the shortages in local data, the indicator values on the 50%-70% level (in 15 communes) suggest that in certain communes in Masovia, the pre-primary school preparation obligation is not fulfilled completely.

**Figure 3. Level of participation in pre-primary education for children aged 5 in the Masovian voivodship**

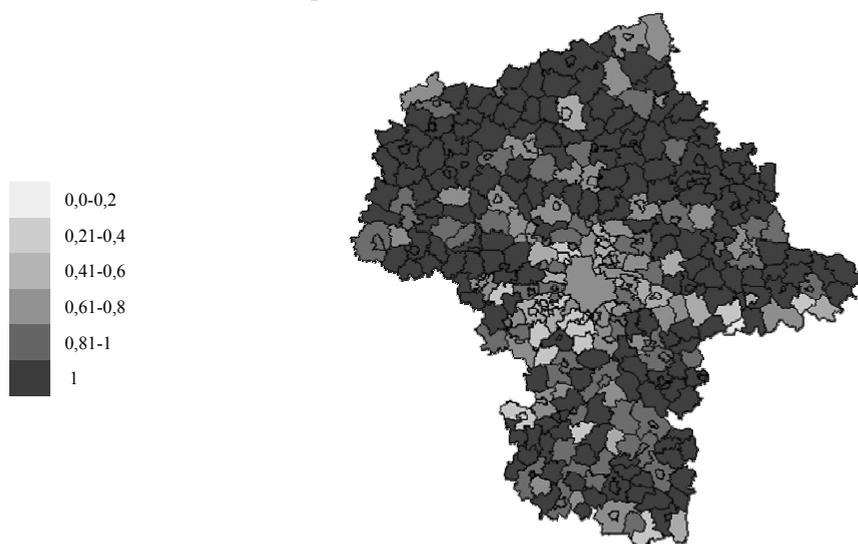


Source: own work, based on the CSO and EIS data.

The distribution of the public establishment ratio (measured as the ratio of the number of children in public establishments to the number of children in all estab-

lishments) in the fulfilment of the entitlement to pre-primary education for children ages 3-5 shows correlations reverse to those described above (Fig. 4). For urban communes in Masovia, this indicator amounts to just over 70%, while attaining over 90% for rural communes (excluding communes bordering cities). It demonstrates that in rural areas, where the percentage of children attending pre-primary education is lower, this education is provided almost exclusively by public (state-funded) establishments. In larger settlements, where the degree of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education is higher, the share of private providers in fulfilling this entitlement is also larger. It is most of all visible in sub-Warsaw communes, where the level of participation in pre-primary education exceeds 100%, the share of public establishments is 30-50%: for example, it is at 29% in Lesznowola, at 40% in Ząbki and at 44% in Nadarzyn). Thus, it must be observed that the higher level of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary care is attained, in some communes, most of all thanks to completing what public establishments have to offer with non-public forms of pre-primary education.

**Figure 4. The percentage of public establishments in providing pre-primary education in the Masovian voivodship**



Source: own work, based on the CSO and EIS data.

In conclusion, the differences in fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education in the Masovian voivodship are large, as in the entire country; the highest differences are observed in fulfilling the entitlement to full-time pre-primary education, that is, for over 5 hours, while the smallest differences are observed in participation in pre-primary education of 5-year-olds. Significant differences according to commune type (urban/rural and a separate category of rural suburban communes) have proven

significant, as has been demonstrated by other researchers of this subject (Balcerzak-Paradowska 2007, Swianiewicz 2012). The particular case of suburban rural communes has been confirmed. What is more, the large level of contribution to high level of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education by non-public establishments has also been observed. The conditions that differentiate the level of participation in pre-school education are subject to further analysis in the following part of the article.

### ***Conditions of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education***

In accordance with the accepted theoretical assumptions, in the present study, we propose a hypothesis of the role of political conditions in fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education in particular communes. We are particularly interested in the factors related to civic engagement as potentially increasing the impact of the residents on the scope and quality of local social services. However, it must be stated that this approach to analysing the conditioning of pre-primary education poses a certain methodological problem. On one hand, the subject of our research is the local social policy considered from the point of view of social citizenship, thus, we assume that the commune is implementing its autonomous, explicitly or implicitly, “pre-primary policy” (at least in terms of access to pre-primary education services for children under the age of 5), expressed, among others, in its decisions on the network of nursery schools, resolutions on nursery school fees, the level of subsidizing nursery schools, etc., resulting in a particular possibility of fulfilling the social entitlement to this type of services. On the other hand, publications of the topic give a full picture of the correlation between the demand for pre-primary services and the level of participation in pre-primary education. For example, Swianiewicz demonstrated that in many communes in Poland with a low level of pre-primary school attendance, there is no problem of the lack of places in nursery schools. More often, it is the parents who, due to cultural and economic factors, do not show a considerable interest in these services, however, this interest has been rising recently (Swianiewicz 2013: 30).

In the analysis of conditions of the level of use of pre-primary education entitlements, the combination of the aforementioned factors is, for us, a signal to make a distinction between supply and demand factors. The demand factors are those that determine the volume of places required in pre-primary education establishments, that is, labour market condition, including the level of employment/unemployment, especially among women, access to informal care (especially support from the child’s grandparents) and a broadly understood cultural context, including beliefs and child-rearing practices for children aged 3-5 that are dominant in a particular community. We should expect that in rural communes not neighbouring a city, with a lower employment rate for women, higher level of unemployment, higher access to informal care (more multi-generational families living in a single household) and more traditional beliefs as to who should take care of a small child, the demand for pre-primary care services might be lower than in urban communes or in rural suburban communes.

The main supply indicator, used both by researchers and policy-makers (local and government-level politicians), is the level of wealth of a commune (Marchlewski 2011: 32, *Ocena skutków...*, p. 5). The measure of assessing the level of wealth of a commune are the commune's own revenues *per capita*, funding, among others, pre-primary education establishments. The public discussion on the availability of nursery schools on the local level often cites the argument that less wealthy communes simply cannot afford to build and maintain pre-primary care establishments<sup>10</sup>. Previous studies have highlighted the increase in the use of pre-primary education, proportionate to the level of wealth of a commune (Herczyński 2012:99). Analysing the correlation between the level of the commune's own income *per capita* and the level of participation in pre-primary education among children ages 3-5 in the Masovian voivodship, with the database used in the present study demonstrates a moderate linear correlation between these variables ( $r=0.55$ ). However, it must be noted that there might be a positive correlation between the commune's level of wealth (own income *per capita*) with labour market conditions (more women working) and, in consequence, the availability of informal institutional care, that is, the demand factors. The observed positive correlation between the commune's income and participation in pre-primary education may be due largely to the influence of the demand-, and not supply factors.

To stop the interfering influence of intercurrent high (low) commune income *per capita* and high (low) demand, the further analysis only includes two sub-samples of communes in the Masovian voivodship, which, after adopting the aforementioned theoretical assumptions and indices, are a set of communes with a potentially internally<sup>11</sup> homogeneous level of demand for pre-primary education services: extremely low (first group) and extremely high (second group). The first group accommodated 31 urban communes (over 1/3 of all urban communes in the voivodship), with a relatively low percentage of the unemployed in working age population, not exceeding 11% (therefore, with a relatively good employment market conditions)<sup>12</sup>. The second group featured 33 rural communes (approx. 1/7 of all rural communes in the voivodship), with a relatively high percentage of the unemployed in working age population (over 14%, therefore, with relatively worse employment market conditions). The sampling process thus ensured the homogeneous labour market conditions (unemployment

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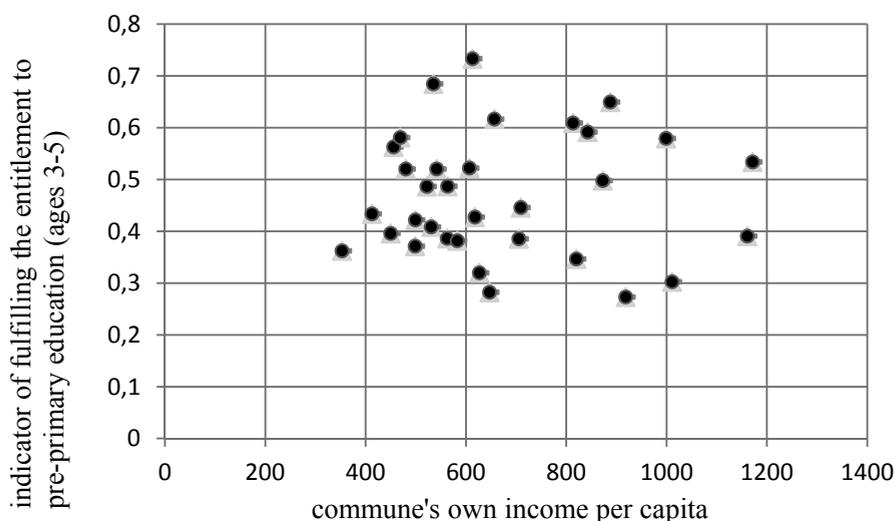
<sup>10</sup> These were the questions raised in, among others, in the citizens' initiative "Przedszkole dla każdego" ("Nursery School for Everyone") from the Union of Polish Teachers, the official position of the Union of Rural Communes of the Republic of Poland, the self-government portal ([www.portalsamorzadowy.pl](http://www.portalsamorzadowy.pl)), or the call of the City Council of Łañcut on altering the principles of financing nursery schools of December 11, 2012, supported by numerous communes.

<sup>11</sup> The category of potentiality should be underlined here. Of course, a stronger inclusion of, among others, cultural differences between particular communes would portray the demand for pre-primary education in much more detail.

<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, no data is available on unemployment level on the level of communes. More detailed information on the communes chosen for the analysis are included in the Annex to this article.

level), level of potential access to informal care by family and cultural context (rural vs. urban areas). For each group, we analysed the linear correlation (the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient and the statistical significance, based on Student's t-test. It appeared that after limiting the impairing influence of demand factors – namely – for the analysis conducted separately in two aforementioned sub-samples, the relationship between own income of communes per capita and the level of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-school education pre-primary care dissipates in both commune groups (it is not linear or curvilinear; see Figures 2 and 3 and Table 2).

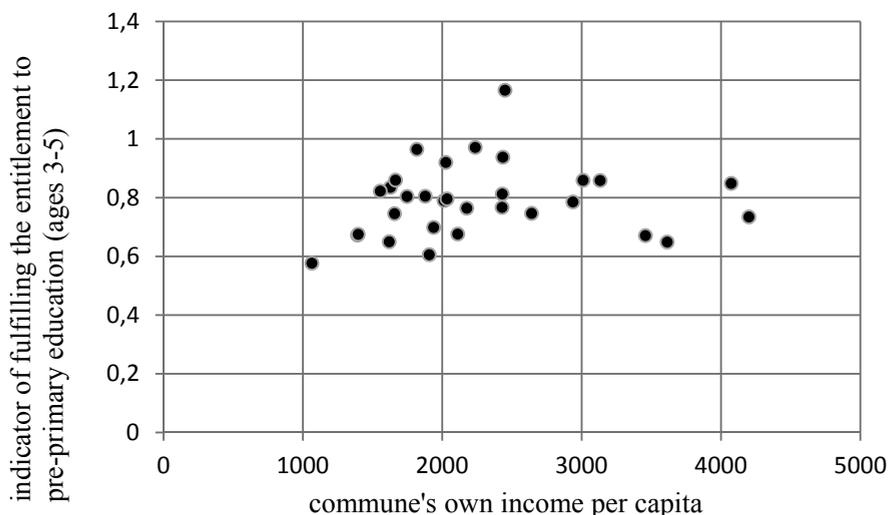
**Figure 2. Two-dimensional distribution of own income per capita and the indicator of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education for children aged 3-5 in rural communes.**



Source: own work. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient:  $r = 0.112$ , no statistical significance.

If the differences in own incomes of the communes does not explain the differentiation in the level of participation in pre-primary education within groups of communes standardized according to demand factors in a significant way, the question becomes what can explain those differences. As mentioned before, by developing the concept of local social citizenship, we hypothesize that one of the significant determinants of the execution of the civil rights is political activity of the commune residents (Turner, Stoker). In order to initially verify this hypothesis, we conducted an analysis of correlation between the level of attendance in pre-primary education within the two aforementioned specific groups of communes and three indices of civic participation of residents: 1) participation (turnout) of commune residents in parliamentary elections (in the year 2010); 2) participation of residents of a commune in self-government elections (in year 2010) and 3) number of NGOs per 10 thousand residents.

**Figure 3.** Two-dimensional distribution of own income per capita and the indicator of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education for children aged 3-5 in rural communes.



Source: own work. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient:  $r = -0.003$ , no statistical significance)

**Table 2.** Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between the studied variables and the enrolment rate at the age of 3-5 by commune classes

Commune group	Own income <i>per capita</i>	Parliamen- tary voter turnout	Self-govern- ment voter turnout	Number of NGOs per 10 thousand residents
Urban communes with low unemployment rate	0.112	<b>0.466***</b>	0.097	0.255
Rural communes with high unemployment rate	-0.003	<b>0.421**</b>	0.018	0.017

Source: own work. Significance level symbols: \*\*\*  $\alpha=0.01$ ; \*\*  $\alpha=0.02$ ;

\*  $\alpha=0.05$

The first indicator (attendance in parliamentary election) reflects, first and foremost, the aspects of the residents' activities related to socio-cultural capital in a given community and civic attitudes, based on civic skills and engagement in the public sphere (Nie, Powell, Prewitt 1969, Brady & Verba 1995). It is in case of this indicator that we should expect a positive correlation with the level of participation in pre-primary education. The voter turnout in self-government elections rather

reflects the power of local community relations and is negatively correlated with the size of commune and therefore is significantly higher in smaller communes, where politically active people are well known in a given community (Nie, Powell, Prewitt 1969). It should also be underlined that the levels of voter turnout in parliamentary elections and voter turnout in self-government elections are not correlated, which confirm the thesis that they concern different aspects (including reasons) of political activism of the residents. The third indicator, which is the number of NGOs per number of residents, is a classic indicator of local “civic” social capital (Putnam 1995, Swianiewicz). Due to diversity of non-government organisation types it includes (both local grass root-type organisations, heavily rooted in community and professional organisations operating at a larger scale), it is difficult to find its precise interpretation, however, it is assumed that it informs on the level of self-organisation of a local community (Chaskin, Lewenstein). The outcomes of correlation analysis are presented in Table 2.

According to our hypothesis, there is a positive, moderately strong and statistically significant correlation between parliamentary voter turnout and the level of participation in pre-primary education, both in the set of urban communes of low unemployment level (namely communes with a potentially high demand for pre-primary services) and in rural communes of high unemployment level (namely communes with a potentially low level of demand for pre-primary services). Therefore, the higher the voter turnout in parliamentary elections in a commune, the higher the level of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education for children aged 3-5. In case of the two other indices: attendance in self-government elections and a saturation of NGOs, the Pearson linear correlation coefficients are not statistically significant. On the basis of this result, we can assume that the level of fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education is higher where the level of civic participation is higher, however, only the activity which is based on individual attitudes and commitment of individuals, rather than the one based on the power of local relations. In the next part of the study performed within the project of M. Theiss, Ph. D., entitled “Local social citizenship in social policy: the example of care services for children under 5”, the question of the meaning (influence) of civic participation in fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education will be examined in qualitative studies conducted in the chosen communes of Mazovian voivodship.

## ***Conclusion***

This text described the phenomenon of the differences in the participation in pre-primary education on the local level in Mazovian voivodship. The level of participation in pre-school education reflects the level of fulfilling the entitlement to this type of education, an entitlement that is an ingredient of the “social element of citizenship”. In accordance with T. Marshall, social citizenship was treated as a political phenomenon, presenting the hypothesis of local, political conditions of social

citizenship, particularly those connected to different forms of political participation of residents. In this paper, we demonstrated that - when controlling the factors influencing demand for pre-primary education services - the difference in political activity of the residents of communes, measured by local turnout (in parliamentary elections) is correlated to the level of fulfilment of pre-school education entitlement to a much higher extent than the differences between the commune's own *per capita* income (which reflects the financial means of a commune in enabling its residents with pre-school education).

This main conclusion, significant in terms of studies conducted until now, surely needs deepening. Nonetheless, it is a fact that when limiting the influence of demand variables on the difference in the level of participation in pre-primary education, the affluence of a commune loses its key role in explaining differences in fulfilling the entitlement to pre-primary education. It has consequences not only for social policy in practice, but also for its theoretical foundations. The proposed legislative changes aiming at providing new financing sources for pre-primary educational centres development will be insufficient for growth in participation in pre-primary education. The perspective of citizens, their cultural capital, competences, attitudes and engagement in fulfilling the entitlement for services becomes more and more crucial.

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## Streszczenie

W niniejszym tekście analizujemy zjawisko zróżnicowania korzystania z edukacji przedszkolnej z perspektywy koncepcji lokalnego obywatelstwa społecznego. Przyjęcie tej perspektywy oznacza, że poziom upowszechnienia edukacji przedszkolnej jest dla nas odzwierciedleniem poziomu realizacji uprawnienia do tej edukacji - składnika

„społecznego elementu obywatelstwa”. Obywatelstwo społeczne, zgodnie z tradycją Marshallowską, traktujemy jako przede wszystkim fenomen polityczny. Uwzględniamy gospodarcze uwarunkowania lokalnej polityki społecznej w zakresie edukacji przedszkolnej, jednak uwagę koncentrujemy na lokalnych, politycznych uwarunkowaniach obywatelstwa społecznego, w tym szczególnie tych, które są związane z różnymi formami partycypacji politycznej mieszkańców. W niniejszym artykule pokazujemy, że zróżnicowanie aktywności politycznej mieszkańców gmin, mierzone lokalną frekwencją wyborczą (w wyborach parlamentarnych), w znacznie większym stopniu niż zróżnicowanie w dochodach gminy *per capita* jest powiązane z różnicami w poziomie realizacji uprawnienia do edukacji przedszkolnej.

**Słowa kluczowe:** lokalne obywatelstwo społeczne, upowszechnienie edukacji przedszkolnej, partycypacja polityczna<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Do elektronicznej wersji artykułu, dostępnej na stronie internetowej [www.problemyps.pl](http://www.problemyps.pl), dołączony został aneks zawierający szczegółowe informacje o badanych gminach z woj. mazowieckiego (m.in. liczba mieszkańców, liczba dzieci w wieku 3-5 lat, liczba organizacji pozarządowych na 1000 mieszkańców)