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**BETWEEN ELECTORAL MANIPULATION
AND OPTIMISATION: THE DATES OF THE ELECTIONS
AND THE TERM OF OFFICE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT
IN POLAND FROM 1990 TO 2024** <https://doi.org/10.2478/ppsr-2024-0017>

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This article presents the results of research on the electoral system for local government organs. The research focused on three elements of the electoral system: the procedures for ordering elections, the dates of voting and the length of the local government's term of office. The aim of the analysis is to describe how the local government electoral system changed in these three areas between 1990 and 2024 and to identify and explain the reasons for the changes. The article includes extensions of the self-government's term of office until the end of April 2024.

Keywords

self-government, electoral system, term of office, election

Introduction

The electoral system for self-government organs has been characterised by variability since the beginning of the 1990s, i.e. from the first self-government law enacted on 8 March 1990 (Dz.U. 1990 nr 16 poz. 96) to the election held in April 2024. It should be mentioned that so far only two local government elections – in 1990 and 1994 – have been conducted under unchanged procedures. Changes were implemented in various elements of the electoral system. They concerned the parameters (variables) of the electoral system, candidate registration procedures or even the opening hours of polling stations (Sieklucki, 2015a, pp. 197 – 245).

This article presents the results of research conducted in three related elements of the local government electoral system, i.e. election ordering procedures, the dates of voting and the length of the local government's term of office. The objectives of the research were to answer the research questions: what changes were introduced in the above-mentioned

aspects and which were their background conditions? Three research hypotheses were formulated. The first is the changes introduced are a deliberate manipulation of elements of the electoral system. The second is the changes introduced are an attempt to optimise the procedures and conduct of the elections. The third is the changes introduced were a consequence of objective factors and were non-purposeful actions, neither manipulation nor optimisation. The meaning of the terms manipulation and optimisation should be clarified at this point. Both concepts are ambiguous in general, but have a concrete content in relation to the electoral system. In science, the concept of manipulation of the electoral system (Michalak, Sokala, 2010, p.79) is used to describe the introduction of changes in the system to achieve specific goals. At the same time, it should be noted that the term manipulation, derived from the Latin word *manipulatio*, literally meaning deception or trickery, indicates the secrecy of these goals, i.e. that they will not be explicitly stated or indicated, but hidden behind others constituting an official justification for the changes introduced. It is worth mentioning that in Poland in the pre-1989 period, the terms of office of national councils were shortened or lengthened through statutory changes, and the science of the time referred to this practice as “manipulating the term of office” (Jarosz, Zawadzki, 1987, p.329). Optimisation, on the other hand, is generally defined as making changes without any hidden aims or intentions. As the online dictionary of synonyms points out, to optimise is, among other things, to change, reform or amend, and the general denominator of change is to strive to improve or enhance (Słownik synonimów). P. Norris (1995) argues, based on the literature, that changes to the electoral system should be made judiciously and aimed at achieving specific goals.

From the theoretical and methodological perspectives, the subject matter fits within the broad field of electoral systems research. The electoral system is variously defined, and one of the basic, debatable issues is the relation of this concept to the term electoral law (Michalak, Sokala, 2010, p.79). This article will not attempt to resolve this dilemma. The broadest understanding of the concept of electoral system is adopted, which is treated as a tool with which elections are conducted (Michalak, Sokala, 2010, p.150-151) or, as R. Katz (1997, p.107) claims, includes everything related to the conduct and determination of the results of elections. Research on electoral systems most often focuses on its hard elements called parameters or variables (electoral formula, electoral method, division into electoral districts, etc.), electoral administration and rarely on other elements related to the conduct of elections such as their organisation and ordering, date setting or term length. From a theoretical point of view, the changes analysed can be placed in the category of minor changes (Charvát, 2023, p.3–5), although relevant to the electoral process. Research on the local government electoral system in Poland has been conducted for a long time by a large number of researchers. The research on the local government electoral system were conducted by Alberski (2010, p.11–19), Bąkiewicz (2008), Chmaj (2023), Flis (2015, p. 41–51), Gąsior and Gąsior (2018), Michalak (2018, p.75–105), Piasecki (2009, p.177–196), Sarnecki (2011, p.47–60) and Sieklucki (2015), but so far the issues of election ordering, term setting and length of terms of office have not been comprehensively addressed. Therefore, the article fills an apparent gap in the literature on the subject. In detail, it falls within the stream of research on changes in electoral systems (Charvát; 2023; Colomer, 2004; Norris, 1995; Renwick, 2010). In the research conducted, research methods such as the systematic method, the document analysis method, the quantitative method and the empirical method were applied, which allowed for the collecting of documents and data, analysis,

testing the hypotheses and formulation of conclusions. The analysis comprises elections held from 1990 to 2024.

Ordering the local government elections

The procedure for the ordering of local government elections, since the election to the municipal councils held in 1990, has been and continues to be regulated at the level of ordinary laws, i.e. electoral laws. The Constitution of 1952 (Dz. U. 1976 r. Nr 7, poz. 36 z późn. zm), the so-called Little Constitution of 1992 (Dz. U. 1992, Nr 84, poz. 426 z późn. zm.) and the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997 (Dz. U. Nr 78, poz. 483 z późn. zm) did not contain any provisions concerning this stage of the electoral process. For the first time, this procedure was regulated in the Electoral Ordinance to Municipal Councils of 8 March 1990 (Dz. U. Nr 16, poz. 96 z późn. zm) and was modified three times until May 2023. The first modification was implemented by the Local Government Ordinance of 16 July 1998 (Dz. U. z 2003 r. Nr 159, poz. 1547 z późn. zm., the second by the Electoral Code of 5 January 2011 (Dz. U. Nr 21, poz. 112 z późn. zm.), and the third by the Act of 11 January 2018 amending the provisions of the Code (Dz.U. 1990 nr 17 poz. 101). This means that the first version of the procedure was applied twice, i.e. in the municipal elections of 1990 and 1994, the second version was applied four times (in the elections of 1998, 2002, 2006 and 2010) and the third and fourth versions were applied only once each, in the municipal elections of 2014 and 2018, respectively.

Table 1. The main elements of the local election ordering procedures.

Electoral Law	Dates for the ordering of elections	Dates for the publication of regulations	Setting the date of elections
08.03.1990	No later than one month before the expiry of the term of office of the councils	No later than the 60 th day before election day	Public holiday falling within two months after the expiry of the term of office.
16.07.1998	No later than 30 days before the expiry of the term of office	No later than the 60 th day before election day	Public holiday falling within 60 days after the expiry of the term of office of the councils.
05.01.2011 (Electoral Code)	No earlier than 4 months and no later than 3 months before the expiry of the term of office of the councils	At the latest on the 80 th day before election day	Last public holiday before the expiry of the term of office of the councils.
05.01.2011 (Electoral Code modified on 11 January 2018)	No earlier than 4 months and no later than 3 months before the expiry of the term of office of the councils	No later than 2 days after the date on which the election is ordered.	A public holiday falling no earlier than 30 days and no later than 7 days before the expiry of the term of office of the councils

Source: own elaboration.

Common to all four versions of the procedures remains the ordering of elections by the Prime Minister through the issuance of the relevant implementing act to the electoral law.

The changes concerned the timing of the issuance of the said legislation and its publication in the Journal of Laws, the Prime Minister's powers (scope of discretion) to indicate a specific election date and other procedural issues. It should also be noted that elections are, as a rule, ordered by ordinance – the only exception to this rule being the 1990 elections, which were conducted on the basis of an ordinance of the Prime Minister (Dz.U. 1990 nr 17 poz. 101). Each of the above-mentioned documents, in addition to setting the date of the elections, also contained a detailed so-called election calendar, i.e. detailed deadlines for the performance of various activities as part of the election process. A summary of the various procedures is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that the same election procedures were followed consistently for 20 years, from the 1990 to the 2010 elections. It should be noted, however, that the procedure was clarified and supplemented in the electoral law of 16 July 1998. This consisted in replacing the terms “one month” and “two months” with 30 and 60 days, respectively, and introducing a solution – maintained in the Electoral Code – on the obligation of the President of the Council of Ministers to consult the State Electoral Commission before issuing a regulation.

Qualitative changes in the local government election ordering procedures were introduced in the Electoral Code. They can be reduced to three main points (Sieklucki, 2015b, p.84 – 85). First, local government elections began to be held before, rather than after, the expiry of the term of office of local government organs. This change was intended to ensure continuity in the functioning of these bodies compared to the earlier period in which the term of office expired first and elections were held afterwards, with the most problematic situation occurring at the level of municipalities, where the term of office of bodies originating from general elections lasted four years counting from the date of elections. Collegiate poviats and voivodeships boards, on the other hand, operated until the day new boards were elected. Second, the election ordering time was extended so that the whole election process started earlier and thus provided better opportunities for preparing election campaigns or compiling and submitting election lists. Third, by introducing the principle according to which a prime minister set the elections for the “last day off work preceding the expiry of the term of office of the councils” (Dz. U. Nr 21, poz. 112 z późn. zm), his arbitrariness to choose a specific voting day was restricted. The rationale for this change can be found in the 2006 local government elections, in which the Prime Minister set the voting day for 12 November, thus triggering concerns about turnout during the elections and criticism from some of the then opposition about the possibility of election campaigning by the government coalition parties during the Independence Day celebrations (Sieklucki, 2010, p.110).

The latest changes to the election ordering procedures were made in 2018. At the same time, while the modification of the date of publication of the ordinance can be considered a change of a technical nature, not affecting its overall shape, the change in the principle of setting the date of the elections is of a qualitative nature. Undoubtedly, a return was made to the solution from before the codification of the election law, but, as it can be inferred from the course of the debate in the Sejm on 13 December 2017 during the third reading of the bill passed on 11 January 2018, this did not arouse controversy, as the 2018 local elections, according to the regulations of the Election Code, would be held on Sunday 11 November, i.e. on the day of Independence Day celebrations. For example, in the discussion during the session of the Sejm, Z. Biernat, a member of Prawo i Spraw-

iedliwość, and M. Sowa, from the Platforma Obywatelska – Koalicja Obywatelska party, were in favour of the change, stating „we believe that local elections... are a celebration of local democracy, it is a time for us to discuss the local problems of our gminas, poviats or voivodeships. There is no place there for the whole debate to be appropriated, to be dominated by national themes” (Sprawozdanie stenograficzne, 2017, p.182). As indicated in the Explanatory Memorandum to the draft law of 11 January 2018, the introduction of the change concerning the determination of the election day was also recommended by the State Electoral Commission for the above-mentioned reason (Druk nr 2001, Sejm RP VIII kadencja, pp. 92 – 93). It is also worth noting, as raised by Anna Rakowska-Trela and Konrad Składowski, that the removal of the word „last” from the provision on the determination of the election day may lead to a situation in which elections will be held on a day other than Sunday, if it is a statutory holiday (Rakowska – Trela, Składowski, 2018, p.206).

It should also be mentioned that the third and last amendment was one of the many changes made to local government legislation. Their presentation goes far beyond the topic of the article, but it is worth mentioning that these changes can be divided into two main groups. The first is the amendment to the provisions of the Electoral Code of 5 January 2011. In this area, B. Tokaj (Hermeliński et. al.2018, pp.199 – 206) indicated 76 different changes regarding various procedures and stages of the electoral process. The second group, in turn, consists of amendments to the provisions of the Acts on Municipal Self-Government, Powiat Self-Government, Voivodeship Self-Government and the Election Code concerning various procedures and institutions most closely related to social participation and the functioning of local government bodies. From the point of view of the article’s subject matter, it is necessary to mention the introduction of a limitation of the number of terms of office to two for which one may serve as a municipal executive. The two-term rule was introduced in the 2018 local government elections, with a proposal in the Sejm to apply it to village heads, mayors and city presidents.

Local government election dates

With regard to the timing of local government elections, it is important to note the period in which they are held. A detailed summary of the election date and the dates on which they were ordered is provided in Table 2.

Initially, local government elections were held in the spring period. This was decided by the first local government election, in which gmina’s councils were elected, set for 27 May 1990. Although there were national councils at the local level, whose term of office ended in 1992, the establishment of local government as an element in the democratisation of the state system and the holding of local government elections as soon as possible were among the objectives of Tadeusz Mazowiecki’s government policy. The aim was not only to activate local communities and establish democratic institutions at the local level, but also to streamline public administration in its broadest sense. Hence, it was originally assumed that elections would be held by the end of April (Piasecki, 2004, p.131), but they were eventually held a month later.

Table 2. Local government election dates.

Date of local government elections	Date of issue of the regulation by the Prime Minister
27.05 1990	19.03.1990
19.06.1994	18.04.1994
11.10.1998	16.05.1998
27.10.2002 and 10.11.2002	21.08 2002
12.11.2006 and 26.11.2006	11.09.2006
21.11.2010 and 05.12.2010	17.09.2010
16.11.2014 and 30.11.2014	20.08.2014
21.10.2018 and 04.11.2018	13.08.2018
7.04.2024 and 21.04.2024	29.01.2024

Source: own elaboration.

Elections to the local government for the second term four years later were also held in the first half of the year, but the next term – the third – was rescheduled until the autumn, determining the time for holding the next election until 2018. The decision to reschedule the 1998 elections was a result of the conduct of work on the administrative reform of the state and, within this, the local government reform initiated by the coalition government formed after the 1997 parliamentary election. In the first half of 1998, it was possible to hold elections only in municipalities, while there was no formal basis for organising elections in poviats and voivodeships, as the legislative work on the reform had not been completed at the time. For example – without elaborating on the complexity of the work on the administrative reform (Piasecki, 2009, pp. 183 – 187) – the Acts on poviat self-government and voivodeship self-government were passed on 5 June 1998, the new electoral law on 5 June, and the Act on the introduction of the basic three-tier territorial division of the state on 24 July (Dz. U. 1998, Nr 96, poz. 603 z późn. zm.). Therefore, as early as 18 February 1998, a group of deputies represented by K. Marcinkiewicz submitted to the Speaker of the Sejm a draft law amending the electoral law to gmina councils by introducing to it Article 121a stipulating that „the date for commune council elections in 1998 shall be set, in accordance with the procedure and rules provided for in this law, on a statutory holiday falling within one hundred and twenty days after the end of the term of office” (Druk nr 214, Sejm RP III kadencja). As indicated in the explanatory memorandum to the draft, „the one-time (in 1998) extension of the period in which elections are ordered after the expiry of the term of office of borough councils is due to the intention to allow elections to borough councils, poviat councils and voivodship local government assemblies to be held jointly in the current year. Holding elections separately would burden the state budget with additional, completely unnecessary in the current conditions, and at the same time significant expenditures (Druk nr 214, Sejm RP III kadencja). A law changing the election date was passed on 20 March 1998 (Dz. U. 1998, Nr 50, poz. 311). Following this amendment, the Prime Minister on 16 May 1998 set the election date for 11 October 1998

(Dz. U. 1998, Nr 60, poz. 388). This date was maintained in Article 208.1 of the Electoral Ordinance to Commune Councils, Poviats Councils and Voivodeship Assemblies adopted on 16 July 1998.

The rescheduling of the 1998 elections caused controversy, noticeable during both the enactment of the aforementioned law of 20 March, which 213 deputies voted in favour, 179 against and 6 abstained (Głosowanie nr 21 z dnia 20 marca 1998 r), and during the discussion at the sitting of the Sejm on 18 March. For example, K. Chrzanowski presenting the position of the Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej coalition, argued against the change in the election date (Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu RP III kadencji, 14 posiedzenie, 1 dzień, 18 marca 1998 r.). The critical assessment of the change introduced led a group of deputies to refer the law of 20 March 1998 to the Constitutional Tribunal in April. The main objection can be boiled down to the statement that “the contested provision, which provides for the extension of the inter-session period to more than 16 weeks, violates the principle of a democratic state of law. According to the applicants, the principle of the rule of law means that the period of mandate conferred on voters must be determined on election day and cannot be changed at will thereafter, unless constitutional provisions expressly provide for its reduction or extension in specifically defined cases. The extension or postponement of the election date at the end of the term of office for ad hoc purposes is contrary to the above-mentioned principle, as well as to the principles of trust in the state and legal stability and certainty” (Sygn. akt K 17/98). In its judgment of 26 May 1998, the Constitutional Tribunal ruled that the challenged law was in accordance with the Constitution. In the justification of the judgment, the Tribunal noted that „by the amendment of the Electoral Ordinance there was only an extension of the time interval in which elections to municipal councils must be held in the current year, and not a change in the duration of the term of office of municipal councils elected in 1994.” In the opinion of the Tribunal, the extension was justified due to „advantages of a social, organisational and economic nature resulting from the combination of elections to organs of all levels of self-government”, and „the legislator, in defining the permissible interval between terms of office, did not exceed the scope of freedom left to him by the Constitution” (Sygn. akt K 17/98).

Term of office of self – government

Similarly to the ordering of elections as well as the setting of their date, the term of office of the organs of local self-government units was not regulated at the constitutional level. Article 45.1 of the Constitution of 22 July 1952 and Article 72.1 of the Constitution Act of 1992 (art.72(1)) left this issue to be regulated by ordinary laws. Identical regulations were adopted in Article 169.2 of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of Poland. Consequently, making changes to the length of the term of office is in practice more straightforward than in the case of other elected organs of the state, i.e. the Sejm, the Senate and the President, whose term of office is determined by the provisions of the Constitution. It should be mentioned that the lack of constitutional regulation of the term of office of local self-government organs does not mean that they can function in a permanent manner, since the term of office itself as a principle of their operation is derived from the principle of the electability of these organs (Korczak, 2014, p.46).

In the Act on gmina self-government passed on 8 March 1990, a 4-year term of office for communal councils was adopted (Dz. U. 1990, Nr 16, poz. 95 z późn. zm.). An identical length of term of office was adopted for powiat councils and voivodship assemblies in the Acts passed on June 5, 1998, i.e. the Act on Powiat Self-government (Dz. U. 1998, Nr 91, poz. 578 z późn. zm.) and the Act on Voivodship self-government (Dz. U. 1998, Nr 91, poz. 576 z późn. zm.), and in 2002 for heads of gminas, mayors and town presidents in connection with the introduction of direct elections of these authorities. The change in the length of the term of office of local government bodies by extending it to five years was introduced before the local government elections of the 8th term by the Act of 11 January 2018 (Dz. U. 2018, poz. 130 z późn. zm.). With regard to the extension of the term of office of local government organs, it should be noted that the draft mentioned to the Speaker of the Sejm on 10 November 2017 did not provide for the extension of the term of office of local government bodies (Druk nr 2001, Sejm RP VIII kadencja). However, this solution was introduced into the bill quite quickly – during the meeting of the Extraordinary Commission for Consideration of Draft Laws in the Field of Electoral Law on 13 December 2017 by voting it by a ratio of 9 in favour, 8 against (Pełny zapis posiedzenia Komisji nadzwyczajnej do rozpatrzenia projektów ustaw z zakresu prawa wyborczego (nr 8), z dnia 13 grudnia 2017 r., Sejm RP VIII kadencja). The extension of the term of office to five years was not the only proposal made – for example, deputy P. Zgorzelski (PSL) tabled an amendment in which the term of office was six years (Druk nr 2113, Sejm RP VIII kadencja). During the discussion on the length of the term of office, two main arguments were put forward in favour of its extension. The first can be found in deputy A. Maciejewski's (Kukiz15) statement: „since we agree that the president has two five-year terms, maybe we should make it so in the form of a carbon copy or postponement that local government bodies also have a five-year term” (Zapis posiedzenia Komisji nadzwyczajnej do rozpatrzenia projektów ustaw z zakresu prawa wyborczego z dnia 28 listopada 2017 r.). The second argument is pointing to better opportunities for economic development policy (Pełny zapis posiedzenia Komisji nadzwyczajnej do rozpatrzenia projektów ustaw z zakresu prawa wyborczego (nr 8), z dnia 13 grudnia 2017 r., Sejm RP VIII kadencja)). It seems that the extension of the term of office can also be linked to the introduction of the principle of double term of office in the sense that it is a balancing solution to the limitations on the length of time one can serve as a municipal executive.

Another extension of the term of office of local government organs occurred in 2022. By the Act of 29 September (Dz. U. 2022, poz. 2418), the term of office expiring in autumn 2023 was extended once until 30 April 2024. In the bill, which was submitted to the Speaker of the Sejm on 15 September 2022 (Druk nr 2612, Sejm RP IX kadencja), difficulties arising from the cumulation of two elections – local government and parliamentary elections – in the same period were indicated as the reasons for the postponement. According to the authors of the draft, the necessity to organise elections to the Sejm, senate and local government units in the same period would be a major organisational challenge related to the holding of the vote, including the appointment of election commissions or the conduct of the election campaign. The explanatory memorandum also argues that “a mere one-month [or, in extreme cases, one-week] break between local government and parliamentary elections would cause major organisational complications for local government units, electoral bodies and candidates wishing to exercise their passive electoral right in both elections” (Druk nr 2612, Sejm RP IX kadencja). Better conditions

for the preparation of local government budgets for the following year were also mentioned among the arguments in favour of the extension of the term of office (Różne opinie samorządowców na temat przedłużenia kadencji, Serwis Samorządowy PAP). According to the current regulations, the draft budget should be submitted to the constitutive organ by 15 November, and the budget should be passed before the end of the year. During the third reading of the bill on 28 September 2022, deputies from clubs in opposition to the Prawo and Sprawiedliwość i.e. the author of the bill, pointed out, among other things, that the postponement of the elections to spring 2024 would cause analogous problems, as the European Parliament elections would be held in the same year, and political reasons related to the fear of PiS losing in the local elections. As W. Kosiniak-Kamysz (PSL) said, „you simply do not want to go with the patch of loser, with the name of loser to the parliamentary elections, and you know that you will lose the local elections. You already do not govern in any voivodeship town today, and you will lose power in most of the assemblies” (Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu. Posiedzenie nr 62 w dniu 28.09.2022a). However P. Adamczyk (Lewica) asked, „is the idea of running for local government after losing the 2023 parliamentary elections, the idea is to find some space for yourself?” (Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu. Posiedzenie nr 62 w dniu 28.09.2022b). T. Zimoch (Polska2050), in turn, pointed out that „(...) there is one, legal, simple, undoubtedly constitutional path to achieve your goal of holding parliamentary elections before local elections. It is enough, dear proposers, to shorten the term of the Sejm and arrange parliamentary elections, for example, late next spring” (Wypowiedzi na posiedzeniach Sejmu. Posiedzenie nr 62 w dniu 28.09.2022c).

In the course of the aforementioned discussion in the Sejm, it was argued – not unreasonably – that the cumulation of elections in autumn 2023 is a result of the extension of the local government’s term of office in 2018 and there was adequate time to possibly solve this problem. Admittedly, the timing of the elections did not allow for both elections to be held together – the local government elections were to be held on 24 September and 8 October, and the parliamentary elections were to be held between 15 October and 5 November – but amendments could be considered to hold both elections together or to hold one of them in the spring of 2023.

Conclusion

Referring to the research questions posed in the introduction, it should be noted that the most changes were made to the procedures for ordering elections, the dates of elections and the term of office of local government were modified twice. On the other hand, the research hypotheses should be separately referred to each of the three categories analysed. In the first one – the ordering of elections – the successive changes introduced were improvements to the procedures used. It can therefore be concluded that the measures taken are optimisation. The replacement of the terms “one month” and “two months” by the more explicit terms “30” and “60” days avoided potential problems arising from the different lengths of the months of the year. Similarly, the subsequent changes concerning the early management of elections and, above all, their holding before the end of the term of office rather than after. In the second area analysed, the postponement in 1998 of elections from spring to autumn was based on rational, objective reasons, whereas the fact of holding elections in this period is less favourable to local government because of the need

to pass a budget by the end of the calendar year. It is therefore difficult to consider this change as optimisation, but it was also not electoral manipulation. The third hypothesis was therefore verified, as holding elections in the autumn did not seem to have a sensible alternative, although perhaps a return to a spring election date should then have been considered. The third area of change analysed is most complex. While the end result of the changes introduced is the prospect of future elections being held in the first half of the calendar year (which can be considered an optimisation), the timing and objectives of the changes allow this change to be considered a form of electoral manipulation. Thus, the first two hypotheses were positively verified. Paradoxically, it was a manipulation (of the term of office) that resulted in an optimisation change. Three considerations should be noted at this point. Firstly, it is not certain that the cumulation of the two elections prevented them from taking place, especially as the change introduced will lead to the need to organise two polls in close temporal proximity in 2024 (i.e. local elections and European Parliament elections). Secondly, there was ample time to solve this problem from 2018 onwards, and its elaboration could have been preceded by various analyses and discussions, e.g. with the academic and local government communities. Thirdly, the cumulation of the two elections was a consequence of the extension of the term of office of local government bodies to five years, which should have been taken into account when working on the law of 11 January 2018. The extension of the local government's term of office until the end of April 2024 is also an expression of the instrumental treatment of electoral procedures and local government.

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