

## MANAGERIAL DECENTRALIZATION IN THE POST-COMMUNIST WELFARE MODEL. EVIDENCE FROM POLAND

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**Purpose:** The aim of this article is to diagnose the level of managerial decentralization in the post-communist social welfare regime according to Gøst Esping-Andersen's classification.

**Design/methodology/approach:** Using the Participatory Action Research method, a diagnosis of managerial decentralization was carried out in all 2573 local government social welfare organizations in Poland (LGSWO). Using formative indicators, a research construct was developed, which was used to diagnose and evaluate management delegation, increasing the powers and responsibilities of LGSWO managers in the Polish social welfare system.

**Findings:** The diagnosis indicated that the managerial approach to management is based on the decentralization of management through the delegation of responsibility. It is worth noting that the responses varied depending on the age of the managers.

**Research limitations/implications:** The results of the study indicate the need to extend the research to CEE countries in order to make comparative analyses with other post-communist social welfare models.

**Practical implications:** Social policy management should be conducted in such a way as to define the true relationship between the decision-making center and decentralized entities. LGSOW managers in CEE countries that have greater autonomy in decision making will be able to respond effectively to dynamic changes in the environment by applying business management methods, techniques, and tools.

**Social implications:** Managerial decentralization processes are of great importance in improving organizational efficiency and the effectiveness of social services.

**Originality/value:** The conclusions of this article provide public policy managers with information on the current state of affairs and the need to pursue decentralization processes in response to the changing socioeconomic environment.

**Keywords:** welfare state, post-communist regime, public management, managerial decentralization, CEE countries.

**Category of the paper:** Research paper.

## 1. Introduction

When analyzing managerial decentralization processes in post-communist CEE countries, it is necessary to focus on the problems resulting from the political transformations in these countries and the turbulent socioeconomic environment that generates new social problems. The social welfare system should focus on restoring a sense of dignity to citizens who are unable to cope on their own. Establishing indicators for measuring decentralization is not as big a problem as determining the degree of advancement of this process (Harguindéguy, Cole, Pasquier, 2021, pp. 185-208). From the point of view of implementation in the public sector, decentralization has legal regulations, but its practical implementation is becoming more difficult and requires the involvement of many stakeholder groups (Dick-Sagoie, Goncalves-Adras, 2020, pp. 1-13). As Ch. Polidano points out that managerial decentralization in a broad sense means a change in the entire structure of state ownership when private ownership increases and state involvement in the economy is reduced. In a narrow sense, however, it is the implementation of management techniques and procedures from the private sector to the public sector (Polidano, 1999). When analyzing managerial decentralization in terms of delegating responsibility to LGSWO managers, it is necessary to go beyond a formal and legal analysis (Overman, 2015, pp. 1238-1262). We need to focus on the origins and directions of these processes in public policy management to determine the true relationship between the decision-making center and decentralized entities (Broekstra, 2018). When analyzing the issue of managerial decentralization as the delegation of responsibility to lower levels in public sector organizations, it should be noted that this is one of the instruments directly related to the concept of new public management (NPM) (Laffin, 2016). The main assumption of this concept of public management is an approach to management through the implementation of mechanisms used in business (Van Dooren et al., 2015, pp. 42-58). When dialogue in the implementation of joint initiatives, conditions for change should be created. It is necessary to increase the effectiveness of action and the shared responsibility of public entities, businesses, and citizens in creating new social policy strategies (Kuhlmann, Wyenberg, 2016). Despite the 35-year gap since the beginning of the political transformation, the social welfare system in Poland has many elements of a conservative welfare state slowly moving towards a liberal regime. The analysis of the social welfare system in Poland was carried out in the context of G. Esping-Andersen's classification of social welfare regimes.

## 2. Decentralization

The phenomenon of decentralization is presented in the literature as a certain characteristic of organizational structures encompassing scientific disciplines such as management and quality sciences or political and administrative sciences. Decentralization is an element of state activity related to the system of exercising power and its territorial division (Azfar et al., 2004). In summary, decentralization should be seen as the transfer of specific public tasks performed by the government administration to other state authorities (Hanson, 2022, pp. 105-128). The concept of decentralization is often used in the following approaches (Smith, 2023): (1) subject, who is affected by decentralization (e.g., the state, administration, organization); (2) object, what is the subject of decentralization (e.g., power, rights, resources); (3) process – how decentralization occurs (horizontal, vertical, apparent, real, progressive, but also limited). Subjective decentralization is the most general in nature (Diaz-Serrano, Rodríguez-Pose, 2012, pp. 179-193). An organization consists of systems with many roots, the most important of which are social character, purposefulness, formalization, and economic component (Morozov, 2016, pp. 275-307). Objective decentralization is used in the context of an organization as a social group with a given level of formalization and specific resources at its disposal (Diaz-Serrano, Rodríguez-Pose, 2015, pp. 411-435). These resources are made up of many elements, integrated into a whole through organizational structures that determine the division of power, coordination, and integration of tasks, as well as the course of work processes and the manner of communication (Savy et al., 2017). Decentralization in a process-based approach means the process of transferring tasks, powers, responsibilities, and resources to local structures. Limits organizational subordination to higher-level entities. Allows independent use of powers and resources (OECD, 2019, pp. 4-19). In management and quality sciences, centralization is defined as the process of systematic maintenance of power and authority by higher-level managers, and decentralization as the process of systematic delegation of power and authority (Odoom, 2016, pp. 21-38; *The Economist*, 2009). The subject of analysis in this article is managerial decentralization understood as the delegation of responsibility to lower levels of management.

### 2.1. Managerial decentralization

Managerial decentralization, or delegation of responsibility (Polidano, 1999, p. 19), means transferring authority to lower-level managers in organizations and increasing the scope of authority and responsibility of the organization (Henderson, Medeiros, 2021, pp. 139-145). Decentralization understood in this way poses a management challenge because, in addition to delegating authority within the organization, it also encompasses the concept of deconcentration (Thomas, 2013, pp. 786-796). Delegation of public tasks in the context of political decentralization should be distinguished from delegation of public services (Andronic,

Dumitrașcu, 2018, pp. 408-413). In the first case, this means a permanent systemic transfer of responsibility for the performance of specific tasks, while in the second case, the transfer of tasks usually takes place through a tender or competition procedure and is limited in time (Polidano, 1999, pp. 227-239). Territorial decentralization processes can take place top-down through the transfer of powers from central authorities to organizations of the basic administrative division (Smith, 2023). The second option is the division of power between the center and the territorial organizations (Zelek, 2023). This results from the bottom-up integration of independent entities and the creation of joint political institutions (Ferlie et al., 1996, pp. 10-15). Material decentralization involves delegating public administration powers to entities that exercise them independently and autonomously (Zelek, 2025). Managerial decentralization can be defined as a technique for managing a public administration organization that involves expanding the autonomy of lower-level managers. It takes place within the structures of state administration (Smoke, 2015, pp. 97-112). The benefits of managerial decentralization include: rapid response to changes in the environment, stimulation of social participation, rapid decision-making, effective communication, and autonomy of objectives (Polidano, 1999, p. 19). The benefits that may result from the introduction of managerial decentralization mechanisms include, above all, streamlined strategic decision-making and ensuring an appropriate legal framework for public policy. In this process, current and potential comparative advantages should be exploited (Andronic, Dumitrașcu, 2018, pp. 408-413). Managerial decentralization emerged with the so-called first generation of reforms of the public administration of the NPM. Some management methods were transferred from the private sector to the state administration in order to increase its economy, efficiency, and effectiveness (Waldo, 2017, p. 169). The pioneering countries that began reforms in line with the concept of NPM were the countries of the British Commonwealth, led by the United Kingdom and the United States (Svara, 2017, pp. 33-55), followed by the Scandinavian countries (Green, 2002, pp. 271-294). Managerial decentralization was implemented in these countries in all areas of the public sector, from reforms in the management of military and police structures, through education, to healthcare and social assistance (OECD, 2016). One of the most important benefits of social welfare system reforms in western Europe and the United States, according to the NPM concept, is the replacement of administrators with managers (Drakeford, 2000, pp. 18-19).

## **2.2. European welfare models**

The analysis of studies in the field of social policy resulted in the establishment of several classifications presenting various systems of policy implementation in the area of social welfare. A review of the literature shows that the most significant classifications were created by the following. Richard Titmuss (Titmuss, 1974); Norman Furniss and Dorothy Tilton (Furniss, Tilton, 1977); Gøst Esping-Andersen (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

**Table 1.**  
*Classifications of Social Welfare Models*

Author	Model
R. Titmuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Marginal (residual) social policy can only intervene when the private market fails to meet needs.</li> <li>– Motivational (subservient, efficiency oriented) - social policy is treated as an addition to the economy, serving a subservient role.</li> <li>– Institutional-redistributive – social policy is an integral institution within a given society, with universal access to benefits and services based on need.</li> </ul>
N. Furniss, D. Tilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Positive state – social policy aims to protect capital owners from difficulties associated with market forces and demands for income redistribution.</li> <li>– Social security state – the aim of social policy is to guarantee a minimum income for all citizens.</li> <li>– Welfare state – the aim of social policy is to equalize the living conditions of all citizens.</li> </ul>
G. Esping-Andersen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Liberal regime.</li> <li>– Conservative-corporatist regime.</li> <li>– Mediterranean regime</li> <li>– Social democratic regime.</li> <li>– Post-communist regime.</li> </ul>

Source: own study based on: (Titmuss, 1974, pp. 138-147; Furniss, Tilton, 1977, pp. 249; Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 248; Esping-Andersen, 2007, p. 6).

G. Esping-Andersen's concept remains the most important typology of social policies to this day. His classification of welfare state regimes is treated as a starting point in discussions about social welfare systems in European countries (Table 2).

**Table 2.**  
*Regimes of European social welfare models according to G. Esping – Andersen*

Regime	Details
liberal (Anglo-Saxon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– well-functioning market and family support,</li> <li>– marginal role of the state,</li> <li>– the state only steps in when the market does not meet the requirements for ensuring minimum subsistence,</li> <li>– state aid is only provided on a temporary basis,</li> <li>– by definition, most citizens should be able to cope well in the conditions of the market economy,</li> <li>– state interference may have harmful effects leading to decreased work productivity and economic slowdown.</li> </ul>
conservative-corporatist regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– permits the state's interference in the sphere of social policy,</li> <li>– the highest benefits are received by public sector employees.</li> </ul>
Mediterranean regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– elementary welfare state,</li> <li>– institutionalized promise of a modern welfare state,</li> <li>– limited participation of the state in social welfare activities,</li> <li>– very generous benefits for some groups with other groups not secured sufficiently,</li> <li>– shift from corporate solutions to partial universalism,</li> <li>– a special type of relationship between public and nonpublic entities in this sphere,</li> <li>– occurrence of the phenomenon of clientelism,</li> <li>– patronage system in the distribution of cash benefits in some spheres,</li> <li>– weakness of state institutions,</li> <li>– empowerment of political parties as main representatives of social interests.</li> </ul>

Cont. table 2.

social-democratic regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– social problems arise from the "system",</li> <li>– the state is responsible for the situation of citizens and their families, as well as for providing forms of assistance,</li> <li>– questioning the thesis that the private market and family are able to meet all human needs at the level expected from the social point of view,</li> <li>– the highest degree of the state's interference in the social policy sphere,</li> <li>– high level of institutionalization of social rights,</li> <li>– in the model, market criteria do not play any role in access to social welfare,</li> <li>– the state is responsible for the social security of citizens.</li> </ul>
post-communist regime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– elements of a conservative welfare state and the liberal concept,</li> <li>– central management,</li> <li>– uniform organizational structure.</li> </ul>

Source: own work based on: (Culfaz, 2016; Minas, 2014; Danforth, 2014; Valeyeva et al., 2011; Heath, 2011; Cerami, 2008; Esping-Andersen, 1985, 1990, 1999, 2007; Hoekstra, 2003).

The post-communist regime encompasses the countries of the former eastern bloc, including Poland. It is characterized by typical features of a socialist system. Post-communist countries had to make changes in the areas of state ownership, centrally planned economies, and autocratic governance. During the transition period in the 1990s, private property, a free market, and democratic systems of government were introduced (Cerami, 2008, p. 5). Rapid changes led to a lack of systemic coherence. These countries exhibit certain elements of a conservative welfare state and liberal concepts, but still retain features of the socialist system (Zelek, 2024). In some sectors, central management and a uniform organizational structure still exist (Esping-Andersen, 2007, p. 3). The countries where this regime operates include Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The article presents the results of original research obtained as part of the 'Diagnosis of the management of social welfare organizational units' among all local government social welfare organizations (LGSWO) in Poland. The conclusions obtained in the area of managerial decentralization, which is one of eight research constructs scaled by formative indicators using the Participatory Action Research method (Chevalier, 2019), are presented.

Two research hypotheses were formulated: H1: LGSWOs have mechanisms to transfer power to lower-level managers in management processes. H2: LGSWOs have processes for increasing the scope of authority and responsibility of lower-level organizations. An attempt will be made to answer the following question: Is the managerial approach to management in post-communist social welfare in Poland based on managerial decentralization?

### 3. Research Methods

The study covered 2,573 LGSWOs in Poland. The study used *Participatory Action Research* (PAR), a research method based on a scientific approach to solving practical organizational problems, with extensive participation of managers (Eden, Huxham, 1996, pp. 526-542; Cornish et al., 2023, pp. 1-14). The basic assumption of the research process was to conduct research ‘with people’ so that LGSWO managers would become its subjects (Heron, 1996, p. 236). These assumptions focused on conducting a two-stage research process (Brydon-Miller, Kral, Ortiz Aragón, 2020, pp. 103-111). In the first stage, a preliminary version of the research tool was created, which was then made available to selected LGSWOs and experts for verification and refinement (Karlsen, 1991, p. 146). The managers had a real impact on the creation of the research tool by commenting on the proposed statements. In the research process, for each observable variable developed in accordance with the PAR assumptions (each formative indicator, area/instrument), sets of questions/statements were developed to enable the assessment of a given variable (Karlsen, 1991, p. 146) in the form of an *OPS-OpenIndex* electronic form. After collecting the comments, the second stage began, that is, conducting the actual research.

In the second stage, the research tool was consulted with experts and practitioners managing LGSWO. The comments submitted by the experts mainly concern formal and legal issues related to the functioning of the organization, such as decision-making procedures. After consultation and consideration of the comments, the research tool was placed on the Web server [www.google.com](http://www.google.com). An email was sent to 2573 LGSWOs with an invitation to participate in the study, along with a link to an electronic form that was active for 14 days according to the PAR guidelines. All responses were exported to *MS Excel* and then subjected to statistical analysis in *Statistica 13*.

**Table 3.**

*A summary of the collected statistical data*

Type of organizational unit social welfare	Total		% of complete form completion
	Sent forms	Full form completions	
LGSWOs	2573	1959	76,1%

Source: own study based on research results.

Multivariate data analysis was used to perform a descriptive analysis of the results (Table 3).

**Table 4.**  
*Multidimensional data analysis indicators*

Indicator	Parameters
<i>Cronbach's alpha</i> coefficient	to assess the internal consistency (reliability) of the construct, taking values from 0 to 1 in a two-sided closed range. It was assumed that values greater than 0.6 indicate the reliability of the construct.
<i>Kendall's tau</i> coefficient	takes values from -1 to 1, with the higher the absolute value, the stronger the relationship between the statements under consideration (negative and positive, respectively). A value of zero means no relationship. Only variables for which the test probability p was lower than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant correlation, were considered.
<i>A test</i> probability	lower than 0.05 provided grounds for rejecting the null hypothesis. The strength of the relationship was then checked using the <i>Cramer V</i> coefficient. The latter takes values from 0 to 1 from a mutually closed range. The higher its value, the stronger the relationship between the variables.
The <i>chi-square</i> independence	test was used to check the relationships between the variables. Before its application, the assumption regarding the minimum numbers in the fields of the table with expected values was checked. The null hypothesis was: <i>There is no relationship between the studied variables and the alternative hypothesis: there is a relationship between the studied variables.</i>
The <i>t test</i> for independent	samples was used to check the differences between the two means. Assumptions regarding the conformity of the distributions of variables in groups with the normal distribution and the assumptions of homogeneity of variance in the groups were met. A test probability value lower than the significance level (here 0.05) provides grounds for rejecting the null hypothesis (H0: <i>the means in both groups are the same</i> ) and accepting the alternative hypothesis (H1: <i>the means in the compared groups differ significantly</i> ).

Source: own study.

The purpose of the study within the construct was to identify the time of decision making, the occurrence of political factors influencing the career advancement process, the manner of task formulation, the possibility of refusing to perform a task and, on the other hand, the increase in employee participation and the reliability of employee evaluation. An attempt was made to determine whether tasks were defined in a transparent manner and whether they were consistent with the qualifications and competencies of managers. The construct measuring managerial decentralization consisted of eight statements, whose numbering was deliberately changed so as not to suggest answers to potential respondents (Table 5).

**Table 5.**  
*OPS-Open Index - Managerial decentralization construct*

No.	Area of decentralization	Statement
06.	Understandable tasks	The tasks and responsibilities for my position are clearly defined
24.	Clear instructions	I receive clear instructions on how to perform my tasks in the unit
29.	The right to refuse a task	I have the right to refuse to accept a task if it is inconsistent with my qualifications
36.	Implementation of other projects	Anyone who works in the unit, if they want, can take greater responsibility for its fate, e.g. by getting involved in nonstatutory activities, projects, etc.
44.	Informing about decisions	I am quickly informed about the decisions of my direct superiors
52.	Tasks consistent with duties	The work performed corresponds to the scope of tasks assigned to my position
56.	Tasks consistent with qualifications	The tasks assigned to me are consistent with my knowledge and experience
59.	Fair assessment	Employee evaluation is carried out in a fair manner

Source: own study based on research results.

### 4. Results of the research

The construct is reliable, as confirmed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.81. The division of the responses of the LGSWO respondents is presented in Table 6. and graphically in Figure 1.

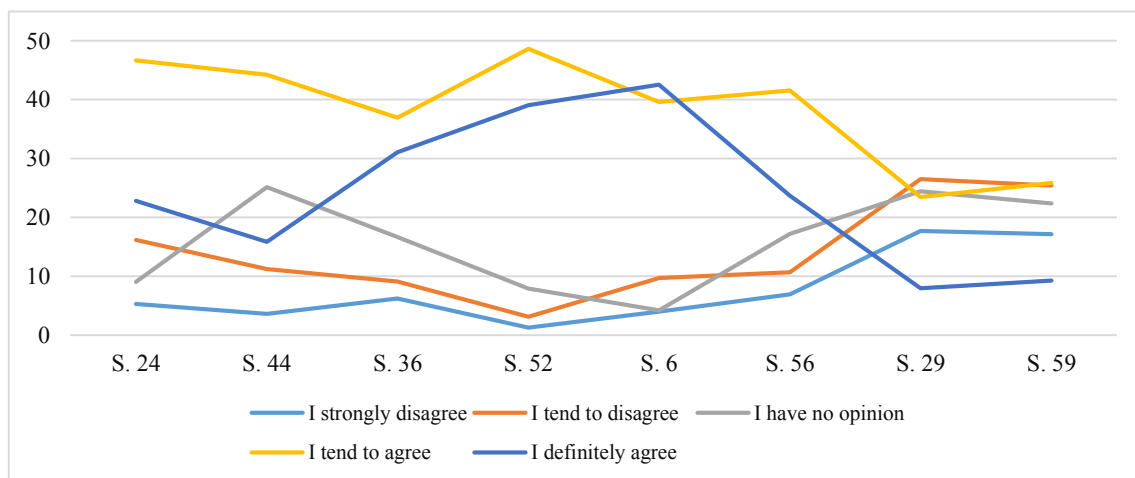
**Table 6.**  
*Responses of LGSWOs respondents within the construct of managerial decentralization (in %, N = 1959)*

Specification	S. 24	S. 44	S. 36	S. 52	S. 6	S. 56	S. 29	S. 59
I strongly disagree	5	4	6	1	4	7	18	17
I tend to disagree	16	11	9	3	10	11	26	25
I have no opinion	9	25	17	8	4	17	24	22
I tend to agree	47	44	37	49	40	42	23	26
I definitely agree	23	16	31	39	43	24	8	9

S. – means a statement.

Source: own study based on research results.

A summary analysis of the survey results confirmed that managers receive clear instructions on how to perform their tasks within the organization (statement 24). 47% of the respondents agreed with this statement to a moderate extent and another 23% strongly agreed. The respondents expressed the opinion that they are quickly informed about the decisions of their immediate superiors (statement 44), which was moderately confirmed by 44% of the surveyed group, but 25% of them did not express an opinion. 37% of the respondents agreed to moderate extent, and 31% strongly agreed that anyone who works at LGSWOs can assume greater responsibility for its fate if they so wish (statement 36). Similarly, high percentages of affirmative responses were recorded for Statement 52. 39% of the respondents confirmed that the work they perform corresponds to the scope of tasks assigned to their position, and 49% of the respondents agreed with this to a moderate extent.



**Figure 1.** Responses of LGSWOs respondents within the construct of managerial decentralization (in %, N = 1959).

Source: own study based on research results.

The aggregated responses of the respondents indicate that the tasks and responsibilities of their positions are clearly defined (statement 6), with only 14% of the respondents disagreeing. The tasks assigned to them are generally consistent with their knowledge and experience (statement 56), which was moderately confirmed by 42% of the respondents and strongly confirmed by another 24%.

In the case of the last two statements, the responses were varied. It is difficult to determine whether the respondents have the right to refuse a task if it is not in line with their qualifications (statement 29). Twenty-six percent of the respondents did not confirm this relationship, but 23% confirmed this statement to a moderate extent. Twenty-four percent did not have an opinion. The aggregated results of the study indicated that the respondents did not express clear opinions on whether employee evaluations are conducted fairly (statement 59). 25% of the study group had doubts about this and 26% moderately considered the evaluation process fair.

The research construct contained eight statements, so the range of possible results was 8-40. The descriptive statistics obtained for LGSWOs are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.**

*Descriptive statistics for the construct of managerial decentralization in the LGSWOs sample*

<b>N valid</b>	<b>Mean arithm.</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Std. deviation</b>
1959	28,55	29,00	8,00	40,00	32,00	5,82

Source: own study based on research results.

The minimum and maximum responses were the same as the limits of the research construct. The mean and median were similar and amounted to 29.0. The standard deviation was 5.82.

There was a statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), positive, and moderately strong (Kendall's tau coefficient = 0.53) between statements 56 and 36. Managers who confirmed that the tasks assigned to them were consistent with their knowledge and experience also believed that everyone working at LGSWO could take greater responsibility for its results. A moderately positive relationship (Kendall's tau coefficient = 0.45) and statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) relationship was found between statements 24 and 56. This means that respondents who claim to receive clear instructions on how to perform tasks in the organization expressed the opinion that the tasks assigned to them were consistent with their knowledge and experience. A statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), positive and moderately strong (Kendall's tau coefficient = 0.47) correlation was also found for statements 6 and 24. Respondents who claimed that the tasks and responsibilities of their position were clearly defined stated that they received clear instructions on how to perform tasks within the organization.

As a result of applying multi-index formative indicators for the construct of managerial decentralization in LGSWOs, the level of delegation of authority to lower-level managers in organizations (H1) and the increase in the scope of authority and responsibility of LGSWOs (H2) were identified. Therefore, the following research hypotheses should be confirmed:

- in LGSWOs, there are mechanisms for transferring power to lower-level managers in management processes (H1),
- in LGSWOs, there are processes for increasing the scope of authority and responsibility of lower-level organizations (H2).

The answer to the question of whether, in the opinion of LGSWO managers, managerial decentralization is the result of delegating responsibility to lower levels of management should also be affirmative.

## 5. Discussion

Managers confirmed that they receive clear instructions on how to perform their tasks at LGSWOs and also responded that they are quickly informed about the decisions of their immediate superiors. Accessibility to all people working in the organization and the opportunity to assume greater responsibility for its tasks were rated highly. Similarly, a high percentage of respondents said that the work they do corresponds to the scope of tasks assigned to their position. The answers clearly show that the tasks and responsibilities of their positions are clearly defined and that the tasks assigned to them are generally consistent with their knowledge and experience. The results of the study confirm the slogan of D. Osborne and T. Gaebler (1992): *let managers rule and authorities steer, not row*, which defines managerial decentralization. In the study, there was no unanimity among managers about the lack of refusal to perform a task when it did not match their qualifications. It was noted that the employee evaluation process is not entirely fair. Those who agreed that the tasks assigned to them were in line with their knowledge and experience generally also believed that anyone working in the organization could take on more responsibility for the tasks performed if they wanted to. Reiter, R. and Kulhmann, S. (2016), analyzing the problems of decentralization of the French welfare state, points to the excessive expectations of central authorities towards local organizations. These dependencies should be considered in relation to Poland's location among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), where, according to G. Esping-Andersen, a post-communist social welfare regime characterized by a conservative approach to management prevails (Esping-Andersen, 2007, pp. 3-6). One of the assumptions of the NPM concept – business-like management (Kickert, 1997, p. 731) – indicates that managerial decentralization should be implemented in a process-oriented manner with the involvement of central authorities at various levels. From the point of view of further research, it seems

interesting to perform a diagnosis of managerial decentralization in a transnational dimension, taking into account the specificity of social welfare systems in CEE countries (Hajnal, Jeziorska, Kovács, 2021, p. 615). Social policy faces new challenges. The profile of social assistance clients is changing. It is not only CEE countries that are looking for new solutions in the area of social welfare systems.

Respondents who stated that they had received clear instructions on how to perform their tasks generally considered that the tasks assigned to them were in line with their knowledge and experience. Managers who felt that the tasks and responsibilities of their position were clearly defined often also felt that they had received clear instructions on how to perform their tasks within the organization. Diverse opinions emerged in the context of how quickly people were informed about the decisions of their immediate superiors. A significant number of neutral responses (25%) were observed in response to Statement 44. This phenomenon indicates potential problems that may impact intra-organizational communication and decision-making. Communication problems can reduce the effectiveness of tasks performed. One of the postulates of the NPM concept according to Ferlie E. Fitzgerald L. and Pettigrew is to reduce the size of organizations and decentralize management, which are important tools for improving the efficiency of public sector organizations (Ferlie, Fitzgerald, Pettigrew, 1996, pp. 10-15).

## 6. Conclusions

It is worth noting that the respondents' responses varied depending on their age. Younger managers showed a more critical approach in responding to older people. This suggests that the younger generation expects a higher level of delegation of responsibility and autonomy. The development process will not be possible without cooperation, partnership, and shared responsibility among public entities. This is reflected primarily in the shift from an administrative system to a system of decentralization and delegation of responsibility, which is one of the elements leading to an increase in the role of human and social capital, a reduction in social exclusion, poverty, and social inequalities, an improvement in quality of life, and an increase in the competence of social welfare organization employees. The conclusions of this article provide public policy managers with information on the current state of affairs and the need to pursue decentralization processes in response to the changing socioeconomic environment. Managerial decentralization processes are of great importance in improving organizational efficiency and the effectiveness of social services. A new approach to social service delivery is currently being proposed - "transformation design"—based on relationships, technology, collaboration, and service design "from the bottom up" rather than centrally imposed. Social welfare organizations operate within a networked, self-organizing system. Managerial decentralization significantly impacts service delivery, decentralizes and

deconcentrates power, and promotes proactive management and catalyzes interagency and intersectoral collaboration.

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