

Financial Law Review

No. 1 (1)/2016
quarterly

UNIVERSITY OF GDAŃSK • FACULTY OF LAW AND ADMINISTRATION
<http://www.degruyter.com/view/jj/flr>

THE EVOLUTION OF EU REGIONAL POLICY AND ITS FUNDING

*Tomasz Sowiński**

Abstract

Regional policy in the European Union becomes more and more important every year, especially in the last few years. As the experiences of the European Union show, structural programs or other forms of support are most effective when realized in the regions, for the regions and through the regions.

The role and position of the regions in the EU strengthens every year. In the following years, regions will work and participate in the EU budget even more intensively. Therefore, there will be more and more programs and grants to be realized in the regions and through the regions.

* Doctor of Laws, Department of Financial Law, Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Gdańsk, e-mail: sowinski@prawo.ug.edu.pl

Keywords:

local self-government, region, EU regional policy, The Treaties of Rome, The Lisbon Treaty, The Treaty of Nice, structural funds, joint-stock company, cooperative, community

Twenty-first century a new era of EU regional policy

This article is a continuation of two articles¹ about the history, development and the current situation of the idea of regionalism and the regions themselves in the European Union since the Treaty of Rome to the present. Although the following discussion constitutes an independent whole, which was started in May 2004, it is also a complement of earlier ones².

The author primarily decided to refer to the new reality in the European Union, after its enlargement to 28 countries. However, also other remarks are presented concerning the enlargement process, unprecedented in its size, the analysis of the development of the EU regional policy in the last few years and remarks on the closest future, including the future of the realization of the EU regional policy which generates a large stream of funds for and through the regions of the member States, which becomes increasingly important in the light of the dynamically developing European Community.

It could be stated that nothing extraordinary has happened since the processes of enlarging the Community (Communities) had already took place before. Nevertheless, it has never been conducted on such a large scale. The EU has almost doubled the number of the Member States, uniting most of the European countries.

¹ T. Sowiński, *Polityka regionalna Unii Europejskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia*, Gdańsk Studies, *Wizje i rzeczywistość*, Vol. III, Gdańsk 2006, also by the same author: *Polityka regionalna Unii Europejskiej Wybrane zagadnienia cz. 2-regiony*, Gdańsk Studies, *Wizje i rzeczywistość*, Vol. IV, Gdańsk 2007.

² The first two articles had legal-comparative character and contained also numerous statistical data, juxtapositions and comparisons. Originally, the third article was supposed to be a continuation of the previous ones which were published in *Gdańsk Studies* and referred to the new member States. However, the author believes that it is still yet to come, therefore the subject of this article remains the same as in the previous ones but its form is rather a scientific essay, a forward-looking reflection which seems, especially nowadays, more necessary than presenting further comparisons and statistics. Additionally, this article raises also a few issues of public finances without which any discussion on the EU regional policy would be almost impossible. The articles altogether comprise a certain whole of considerations.

The accession of the Central European countries was of particular importance since they had just regained full sovereignty after the disintegration of the communistic bloc which after the World War II, as a result of the Yalta Agreement of the “Great Three”, remained under the influence of the Soviet Union. These countries had felt the yoke of the enslavement with the imposed political system for more than 44 years and the gendarme guarding it not to be rejected.

However, the peaceful revolution of “Solidarity” which began in Gdańsk Shipyard bearing the name of one of the major constructors of the communist system and its murderous ideas, initiated by the workers who created a great social movement “Solidarity”, gathering at its peak period almost half of the adult population of Poland, covering almost the entire country, and after the tragic years of the Martial Law, revived and strengthened, spread throughout the Central and Eastern Europe enabling the other countries to regain their freedom and at the end of the XXth century serving as a model of the new order in Europe.

Most of these countries recognized quite quickly the membership in the European Community, which has functioned since 1957 and which after 1992 finally adopted the name the European Union, as the most effective way of development, fighting with years of neglect, increasing the feeling of economic and social security and providing the society with the best possible perspective for the future.

Undoubtedly, this is a practical demonstration of the validity of the establishment and development of the EU, its effectiveness and practical lack of alternatives, at least on the European continent. It is also a victory of the idea of self-determination of States and nations as to their affiliation and independent, free shaping and building their place and position in the international community.

What should also be noted, is the courage and determination of the then European Union Member States which decided to enlarge the Community from 15 to 25 and a half year later 27 countries, almost doubling their number, as it was already mentioned. On the other hand, another scenario would be a denial of the idea of the European Union, and in particular the solidarity of its Member States. You can also meet up with the conclusion that Western European countries repay, in part, certain kind of debt they taken out enjoying the freedom and democracy and the possibility of unrestrained economic and social development, while recognizing the cost of sacrifices and often – victims, suffering Behind the Iron Curtain for nearly half a century, in the countries which the eastern “brother” kept a tight rein on them with his mighty and ruthless hand.

These were the circumstances in which the historic enlargement of the European Union took place. Moreover, the EU, even before the enlargement, had invited the candidate countries to an important discussion on the future of the European Union while preparing the Treaty of Nice. It is also important to say that the extension, regardless of the cost, was in the interest of both the countries joining the EU and its members. A new international order that takes place in Europe is also a guarantor of security and peaceful development of all EU Member States, as well as many other states related with the Union in various ways, such as Norway, Iceland and Switzerland which are not members of the EU but are members of Schengen zone which still does not include all the Member States. One can also say that the status of the Vatican in the Republic of Italy and arrangement of mutual relations between the two countries, makes Vatican *de facto*, though not *de jure*, also a member of the European Union. Of course, the details of the situation may be argued, but the EU law intertwines with the customary law, as well as international law, 28 other legal systems of the Member States and their separate, often specific customs and traditions of application of that law. If we add the problems connected with the so-called multicentrism of the lawmaking in the EU, it is easy to imagine how explosive the mixture is, and which from time to time makes itself felt and causes various problems in places and circumstances in which they were not expected.

Nice or death

This call was related to the protection of the post-Nice status quo, especially the favourable, although not privileged, position of the countries which joined the EU in 2004. In fact, it is hard to say the position was really favourable since it simply resulted from a certain logic and standards of functioning of the EU, and of course from the current EU law which was not supposed to be changed by the Nice Treaty, it only sanctioned the fact that 10 new members would access the organization, and still being aware that next two would also join the Commune, which made the number of the Member States double.

The Treaty of Nice or rather its expected effects (or to be precise the ones which were unforeseen during the process of creating the treaty) occurred to be a surprise for some countries of the so-called old Union. In the bilateral relations nothing actually had changed, which means the proportions of votes or the parity for the particular Member States within various Union groups had saved their char-

acter, however some of them missed the fact that, in the general larger forum, the previous groups of interest had lost their dominant position. Hence began the process of dynamic and unprecedented questioning of the great achievement which was undoubtedly the Treaty of Nice, even before it went into effect.

Under the pretext of work on the EU constitution new and completely different solutions of internal mutual relations were introduced, especially decision-making system and management of such a particular organism as the European Union, giving a definite advantage to the countries which are economically the strongest, what is more, favouring specifically formulated and calculated methods of voting which by then was nothing like the unanimous Union making decisions in the formula of consensus.

Lisbon – the beginning of the end of the EU?

Initially, there were attempts to introduce some new solutions under the pretext of establishing a Constitution for the EU. However, the Constitutional Treaty was considered controversial in a number of aspects. The very form of “constitution” was not acceptable for part of the Member States. The constitution was undoubtedly a premature act, and what is more the haste in which it was prepared and lack of proportions in the content did not encourage its acceptance. Finally, despite the problems, resistance and doubts, the Constitutional Treaty was forced through to undergo the ratification procedures. However, the very idea of the EU collapsed mainly because of the loss in the constitutional referendum in one of the fervent promoters of adoption of the EU Constitution – France.

The problem was remedied by unprecedentedly rapid creation of the content of the new treaty which took its name after the place where it was signed – the Lisbon Treaty.

Unfortunately, the concept of the “new” treaty is not justified, since it is in its content, a stripped of any valuable content concerning the development of the EU, the general values, ideas, civil liberties or simply – human, social rights, etc., remnant of the previously rejected constitution, in its worst and least favourable form. It may be stated that some influential groups in the EU seized to hide the real reason for the emergence and development of the idea of European Constitution behind the veil of ideas and freedom, which are in fact very general and non-committal, but directly, firmly and uncompromisingly the new division and areas of

influence in the EU were stipulated in the Treaty. One does not need to be a prophet to notice that the previous (from the time before the enlargement) status quo and a definitely privileged position of some Member States was even strengthened.

Therefore, the author took the liberty of stating that the parity and the voting rules took the “least favourable form”, in order to underline the definitely less favourable position of most of the other Member States of the EU, in comparison to the content of the Nice Treaty. Unfortunately, these issues are also relevant to Poland.

Two words which actually exhaust the main arguments justifying the conclusion of the Treaty of Lisbon are efficiency and speed of action, which is to influence the effectiveness of the EU, but one can read also about increased “fairness” (!), the appropriate proportion, “real relationship,” transferring greater influence on the Community to those states which make a greater contribution, etc. ...

It reminds me of Helmut Kohl’s words who, at the time of German presidency of the European Community, explained how he deals with a serious problem or a conflict of interests. Being the Chancellor of the largest Member State, he tried to understand how the problem is perceived by the smallest state in the Community, in order to gain perspective and understand its needs, but also multi-faceted relationships, and sometimes apprehensive individual Member States.

That is the Union of Roman and Nicean ideas. That is, so to say, a “cooperative” of the EU in which every state, regardless of its contribution, has an equal voice in the discussion and voting, which aim determines the fulfilment of the idea of its creation and the common good. It does not prevent sharing the potential profit according to the proportions of the contribution made to the “cooperative” – community. It is worth adding, that the shared profit is important but not the most important.

The Lisbon Order is an ideological construction of a joint-stock company, chasing the profit and every now and then losing the values and set aims to maximize the profits, often taking care only of the part of the shareholders (the largest). Moreover, those largest states are able to convince (“buy”) other states in order to have the majority of votes, not necessarily presenting the opinion and aspirations of the majority of shareholders (Member States), basing on the mathematical majority of shares (parity) which was cunningly included in the Treaty in order to let the major participants always play the game in a way which ensures them the possibility

to force through their own solutions, alternatively to effectively veto the unacceptable propositions.

Hence the title of this subsection. It seems, however, that a question should be asked: how long those who generally lose, even if they are in the majority then, are going to bear it, with distaste? How long will they explain to the public opinion that it is necessary to accept the disadvantageous solutions just because they are beneficial for the whole of the EU, and they have to manifest their solidarity? How long can they silence the voices which say that such “company” is bad?

The author of this study strongly supports the idea of a cooperative model!

If the Member States could communicate for 40 years on thousands of problems and solve them on the basis of consensus, so why suddenly it became impossible? Or maybe it is only “onerous”? Maybe nobody wants any more to “bend” over the problem, as the chancellor Kohl used to do looking at the problem with the eyes of the little and weak ones, but they prefer the “shortcuts” and so called simple solutions. It is the road to inevitable conflicts, friction, consolidating divisions, aversion and most of all there is no solidarity any more, which used to be the foundation of the Community which means less and less in the EU world.

Speed, efficiency, effectiveness, bigger number of countries, problems with finding a compromise and consensus...? Will a solution imposed by force have a firm foundation? Will it be respected and effectively implemented by most of the Member States, being actually in minority while parity voting? Is it true that the European Commission is nearly twice as large as it used to be, similarly to the EU administration? Then, who is to take up the often laborious consultations, agreements, convincing others using the strength of arguments rather than justifying the strength of the parity voting, many a time also threatening the small Members that they will not get what they need or what additionally they may count on. It may be called politics, however it resembles corruption much more, perhaps political corruption but does it change anything...? What respect will a Member State have for the EU if it had to face the consequences of maintaining its position against the preferred line, or even one that decided to agree on the offer but with an awareness of the fact that next time the situation may change?

Where there is no respect, only business matters, but it will also be the only factor deciding about staying inside the Union, which changed from the Union of states to the Union of businesses, but only some shareholders benefit from it. Nevertheless it should be noted that the market of potential new shareholders is very lim-

ited and it may occur that there will be no one to take over the shares left by those who leave. A company deprived of capital, even a little part of it, may lose its impetus or even start declining. Taking into consideration the risk of a snowball effect, it may occur that it may endanger even the biggest shareholders and crush them with such a force that neither they themselves, nor with the rest of the old Community will not only fail to reach the previously established objectives but be unable to raise up again. Because they were in a hurry and nobody wanted to give his attention to the problem. Things, however, could have gone slowly but properly³ ...

Regions the new entity in the implementation of EU policies and financing tasks

From the very beginnings of the European Union (European Coal and Steel Community), it was clear that if this experiment worked well, the Community would expand objectively and subjectively and organizationally integrated and strengthened. This is exactly what has happened.

In the long process of European unification it would be probably difficult to find any negotiations and discussions on the occasion of which issues related to regional policy were not covered.

Records of coordination of Community regional policy included in the Speek Report⁴ were not included in the final version of the Treaties of Rome⁵.

The emerging EEC was not yet ready to deal with regional policy, however it would probably be more appropriate to say that the rank of regional issues was undervalued compared with the excellency of the huge changes that have taken place in Rome on 25 March 1957.

However, in the Treaty establishing the EEC one can find stipulations about the need to create conditions of undistorted competition and the elimination of all forms of protectionism.

³ It is a paraphrase of an epigram titled "Wół minister" [A minister ox], Ignacy Krasicki, *Dzieła Krasickiego. Fables and parables*, Paris 1830, p. 6.

⁴ Paul Henri Speek, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium, the international head of the team working on the treaties of Rome. An ardent supporter of the development of European regional policy.

⁵ K. Głąbńska, M. Grewiński, *Europejska Polityka Regionalna*, Warszawa 2003, p. 35.

It was supposed to initiate natural equalization of disparities between regions, as well as social inequalities and ensure balanced development of communities. Unfortunately, the effects of the “invisible hand of the market” as well as the effects of the newly established European Investment Bank did not agree with expectations⁶.

For many years the common regional policy had been mainly present in the declarations and various reports indicating its absence, the necessity of following it and even the fact that the European integration is not conducive to regional development.

The sixties were full of important events favouring the development of regional policy as a result of which it was decided to set up the European Regional Development Fund during the Paris summit in 1972. Its main aim was to assist the weak and poor regions in the Member States of the EEC and the countries that were soon to enlarge the EEC⁷. Changes in the functioning of the European Social Fund were also introduced. The Fund was supposed to reinforce the problem regions. What is more, the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, to a small extent as a matter of fact, also was supposed to support regions.

Despite a number of perturbations, due to establishing the ERDF in March 1975 EEC had to use a completely different approach to the problem of regional policy, as reflected in the appointment of the Regional Policy Committee only four months later. The transition from the general expressions and declarations concerning regions as a whole, to individualise the region with its determinants and the diversity of legal and organizational perspective as an administrative unit was definitely a new quality⁸. It may be concluded that, while thinking in regional categories had been developed for more than twenty years, after the ERDF was established and its subsequent modifications it took only a few years to conduct almost a revolution in the Community regional policy. Similarly, in Poland in 1998 the new administrative division of the country was introduced and new local govern-

⁶ The EIB was set up under Art. 198 of the Treaty establishing the EEC (Rome 25 March 1957) however small equity (approx. 1 billion DEM) and the differences in exchange rates caused the capacity of the EIB were not originally fully utilized.

⁷ Great Britain, Ireland and Denmark joined the EEC in 1973 and the regional fund was to be established by the end of that year.

⁸ T. Sowiński, *Polityka regionalna Unii Europejskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia*, Studia Gdańskie, Wizje i rzeczywistość, Vol. III, Gdańsk 2006, p. 27.

ment authorities were entrusted the newly created administrative units at the district and regional levels⁹.

Regardless of the specific legislation defining the status of the region within a country, it started to play a crucial role in the regional policy implementation. Already in the European Union, under the Treaty of Maastricht, a number of important changes were made in the regional policy. The Committee of the Regions was established¹⁰. The most important tasks of the Committee of the Regions is to support the development of the infrastructure of road, rail and trans-European transport networks and investment in environmental protection. In the financial scope it supports new structural funds¹¹ – especially the Cohesion Fund¹².

During the implementation of the Integrated Mediterranean Programme, the local authorities began to play an important role alongside the governmental authorities, inter alia, during their active participation in the negotiations with the European Commission. Undoubtedly, this can be considered a turning point in the treatment of regional policy and the recognition of subjectivity of the regions, in their Community and the intra-state relationships. It is not just about the previously described complicity of regions in preparations for IMP, but primarily about the practical operations of the local self-government units during the implementation of the program which have shown their efficiency, the relevance and much greater accuracy of the operations, the quality and, most importantly, also a significant reduction in costs of the realized tasks.

Another important argument for maintaining, and even financial strengthening of the hitherto EU regional policy, beyond doubt, is also the fear of large uncon-

⁹ More information: M. Kulesza, "Droga do Polski prawdziwej" [in:] *Podstawy reformy samorządowej*, E. Toczyńska (ed.), Gdańsk 1998; J. Płoskonka (ed.), *Reforma Administracji Publicznej 1998–2001*, Warszawa 2001; T. Sowiński, *Decentralizacja finansów publicznych warunkiem rzeczywistej decentralizacji państwa* [in:] *Annales*, Lublin 2012.

¹⁰ The Committee of the Regions is an advisory committee of consultative character. 353 members of the committee are nominated for a term of four years by the European Council, at the request of the Member States.

¹¹ T. Sowiński *Polityka regionalna Unii Europejskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia*, Studia Gdańskie, Wizje i rzeczywistość, Vol. III, Gdańsk 2006, p. 29.

¹² The Cohesion Fund (EMS), although formally it is not a structural fund, it is generally considered one because of the same tasks. It is considered the second European Fund after the ERDF according to the funds that are at its disposal. The Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) was also created under the Maastricht Treaty, but its meaning is small compared to EMS, since the former has only 2% of the means of structural funds at its disposal, whereas the latter 30%.

trolled migration within the Union to which the stable and strong member states would not want to allow, even for a promise to increase the amount of the Structural Funds. Thanks to that poor regions could be strengthened in order to create jobs and prevent migration. The need to allocate significant resources for environmental protection, which is carried out mainly in the regions, as well as communication infrastructure was supposed to help the above mentioned aim. Certainly an important and expensive task, not necessarily carried out by the regions but certainly in the regions, was and still is the adaptation of agriculture and rural areas to Community standards and solutions. One of the significant events after the enlargement of the European Union was the establishment of the Commissioner for the regions. The creation of a ministerial post and a department dealing with regional policy is a milestone in the development of the regional policy of the European Union. The first EC Commissioner for the Regional Policy was Danuta Huebner from Poland. It goes beyond doubt that the regional policy during her term became an independent, significant and, what is worth stressing, also lasting element of the policy and the implementation of strategy of the EU. Nevertheless, different views on the participation of the regions in the realization of the EU tasks still can be noticed. Regardless of them, there have been some demands that the European Commission should unify the law and principles of functioning of the regions in the Member States since long time ago. One of the aforementioned demands was the clarification of the criteria for granting funds and avoiding the conflicts around this topic. These are actually quite common since in the EU there are regions which significantly vary in size, like for instance Bavaria [12 million], which is indeed a Land (federal state), but still in Germany there is another, several times smaller region (land) – the Bremen [0.7 million], and Bremen in turn is greater than the EU Member State – Luxembourg [0.412 million] which also has 3 regions [0.23; 0.11 and 0.09 million people]¹³.

So far, the EU can cope with this problem using the concept of the NUTS classification¹⁴.

¹³ Data taken from: T. Sowiński, *Regiony w wybranych państwach członkowskich* [in:] *Regiony Acquis communautaire*, Z. Brodecki (ed.), Warsaw 2005, p. 80, 81.

¹⁴ NUTS issues, as well as a broader approach to the problem outline, inter alia: Z. Brodecki (ed.), *Regiony Acquis communautaire*, Warszawa 2005; K. Głąbńska, M. Grewiński, *Europejska Polityka Regionalna*, Warszawa 2003; I. Pietrzyk, *Polityka Regionalna Unii Europejskiej i regiony w Państwach Członkowskich*, Warszawa 2003; T. Sowiński, *Polityka regionalna Unii Europejskiej Wybrane zagadnienia cz. 2 – regiony*, Gdansk Studies, *Wizje i rzeczywistość*, Vol. IV, Gdańsk 2007, pp. 64–87.

It leaves, however, the issues of regionalism to the inner solutions of the Member States, but recommends at the same time, especially in the matters of self-government, using the European Charter of Local Self-Government¹⁵.

It may be stated that the regional policy of the EU is characterized especially by the plurality of types, sorts, characters, legal statuses, sizes, population, level of independence etc. in the unity of holistic perspective and treatment of regions by KE in the EU regional policy.

The consequence of this state of affairs is a coherent policy of financing of the tasks realized by the regions in particular Member States, as well as the use of regional administrative structures by the EC for the implementation of the tasks arising from the EU policy in the subsequent financing periods with the tasks financed by the Cohesion Fund to the fore.

The structure and operation of the European Funds – outline

Implementation of the EU budget is carried out through various funds, programs and financial instruments.

Five major funding supports the economic development of all countries in the EU in line with the objectives of the strategy “Europe 2020”.

1. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – its purpose is to correct the imbalance in the level of development of regions within the EU and strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion of the EU as a whole. ERDF supports, inter alia, the investment in production, infrastructure and strengthening small and medium-sized enterprises.

2. The European Social Fund (ESF) – its main purpose is to combat unemployment in the Member States, mainly through increased employment opportunities and training. The support for different regions and social groups is co-financed from its funds, especially for people at risk of poverty and young people entering the labour market.

3. Cohesion Fund (CF) – is designed for the Member States whose gross national income (GNI) per capita is less than 90% of the average GNI of the EU; its aim is

¹⁵ The European Charter of Local Self-Government was drawn up in Strasbourg on 15 October 1985 and ratified by Poland as a whole, Dziennik Ustaw of 25 November 1994, No. 124, Item 607.

to reduce economic and social disparities and promote sustainable development mainly through large investments in transport infrastructure and environmental protection.

4. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) – is involved in supporting restructuring of agriculture and strengthening the development of rural areas.

5. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) – supports the restructuring of the fisheries sector of the Member States.

More than one-third of the funds planned for the 2014–2020 financial perspective (almost 352 billion euros) falls for the ERDF, ESF and CF. The two remaining funds will receive more than 101 billion euros. In total, until 2020 the EU plans to transfer through these funds almost half of its total budget (over 453 billion) to help the Member States¹⁶.

The main criterion for the allocation of EU funds for each Member State is the level of gross national income (GNI) per capita. Regions with the level of GNI per capita in the range of 75%–90% of the average EU level are among the regions in transition, they receive more support. More developed states are the ones with the GNI per capita reaching 90% or more of the EU average. The category of less developed regions where the level of the national income per capita is less than 75% of the average of the EU includes: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic without Prague, Slovakia, Hungary without Kozep region, Romania without Bucharest, Bulgaria, a large part of Greece, south Italy and Sicily, Malta, Poland without Mazowieckie province, Portugal without Lisbon and Algarve, Spain without Extremadui and the western part of the United Kingdom.

It is worth pursuing then, because the total amount of funds allocated to Member States in the 2014–2020 financial perspective on regional policy will exceed 351 billion, which is over one-third of the whole EU expenditure. It is hard to think of more relevant and distinct proofs for the seriousness with which the EU currently treats regional policy and for the recognition of the relevance of the efforts of many people for over half a century, seeking to give the correct position of regional policy in the overall policy of the European Union and emphasize the role of regions which they may play also by, or perhaps above all, partnering in the EU tasks and being one of the biggest beneficiaries of the funds from the EU budget.

¹⁶ <http://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/stroony/o-funduszach/zasady/> [last visited: 19.01.2015].

References:

- Brodecki Z. (ed.), *Regiony Acquis communautaire*, Warszawa 2005.
- Głębinska K., Grewinski M., *Europejska Polityka Regionalna*, Warszawa 2003.
- Krasicki I., *Dzieła Krasickiego. Fables and parables*, Paris 1830.
- Kulesza M., *Droga do Polski prawdziwej* [in:] *Podstawy reformy samorządowej*, E. Toczyska (ed.), Gdańsk 1998.
- Pietrzyk I., *Polityka Regionalna Unii Europejskiej i regiony w Państwach Członkowskich*, Warszawa 2003.
- Płoskonka J. (ed.), *Reforma Administracji Publicznej 1998–2001*, Warszawa 2001.
- Sowiński T., *Decentralizacja finansów publicznych warunkiem rzeczywistej decentralizacji państwa*, [in:] *Annales*, Lublin 2012.
- Sowiński T., *Regiony w wybranych państwach członkowskich* [in:] *Regiony Acquis communautaire*, Z. Brodecki (ed.), Warszawa 2005.
- Sowiński T., *Polityka regionalna Unii Europejskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia*, Gdańsk Studies, Wizje i rzeczywistość, Vol. III, Gdańsk 2006.
- Sowiński T., *Polityka regionalna Unii Europejskiej Wybrane zagadnienia cz. 2 – regiony*, Gdańsk Studies, Wizje i rzeczywistość, Vol. IV, Gdańsk 2007.
- <http://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/strony/o-funduszach/zasady/> [last visited: 01.19.2015].