

Mgr Jolanta Kaczmarek

Women's rights in the programs of Polish political parties and the political participation of Polish women in public life after 1989

Summary

One of the key problems of modern civilisation is the issue of the proper functioning of democracy. Among the constitutive rules of this system was the participation of citizens in the exercise of power. It is carried out in the act of electing representatives of the sovereign to the representative bodies of the most important state institutions. In this context, the issue of equal participation of women and men in the governance of the state is a fundamental principle enshrined in instruments of international law. Gender equality in this sphere has also become an inherent part of European Union legislation. It is also guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. This principle should be seen as the culmination of many years of efforts by generations of women to equalise the civic privileges of society as a whole.

Polish women received the right to vote in 1918. However, this did not mean an automatic equal representation of both sexes in top state positions. The politics of the Second Republic, the Polish People's Republic and the Third Republic did not strengthen women's opportunities in this field, stereotypically associating management with the male sex. Barriers of a cultural, socio-economic and political nature, limiting women's involvement in the space in question, have proved difficult to eliminate. During the political transition period, groupings from different sides of the political scene showed no interest in supporting women's entry into the public sphere. For this reason, among others, women were a minority in important public positions in the economy and politics. Currently, the formations address a wide range of demands to the female electorate in various spheres of functioning. At the same time, it should be noted that the number of women in the legislative and executive branches of government increased after 1989, but rather to a rather limited extent.

The subject of the research undertaken in the dissertation is the issue of women's political rights and, more precisely, the presence of women's issues in the programmes of Polish political groupings, as well as the scale of women's participation in the public space, mainly in the organs of legislative and executive power.

The main objective of the dissertation is therefore to try to answer the questions to what extent women's rights issues are present in the programmes of Polish political parties and to what extent the mainstreaming of women's rights by parties translates into increased participation of Polish women in political life.

The timeframe of this dissertation is from 1989 to the end of 2022.