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## **Polish school system after 1989.**

### **Between democratization, centralization and commercialization?**

Over the past three decades, the Polish school system has undergone constant changes in the scope of structure, functioning, as well as its content, transmitted by schools. This work is an attempt to describe and explain the nature of these changes in the context of the three ideas that, in the author's opinion, underpin formation of subsequent institutional solutions in school system after 1989. The mentioned processes are: democratization, centralization and commercialization.

The analytical approaches related to measuring the quality of democracy presented in the work allowed to create an original, author's tool supporting the analysis of democratization and centralization of the school. In turn, the reflection on the concept of commercialization, and in-depth analyzes of the characteristics of public and private goods, allowed to indicate the answer to the question in what way the character of common school education was changed.

The research process was subordinated to the perspective of radical humanism, which allowed a qualitative analysis of subsequent changes occurring within the Polish school system after 1989. The following areas were examined: 1) the structure of the school system, including the issue of private education, 2) functioning of the system, especially in the context of the relationship of the school, local government and central administration, as well as external and internal control, 3) democratic school institutions and procedures, 4) selected issues related to the financing of the Polish school.

The results of the conducted research indicate that the Polish school is currently neither fully democratic (despite the fact that since the beginning of the 1990s, at least in a discursive aspect, it was heading in this direction), or centralized – thanks to the decentralization of the structure of the units responsible for functioning of schools. Furthermore, reflection on the nature of Polish school education in the scope of the concept of public and private goods allows to formulate a thesis about its only partly public nature. Although it is not a private good - due to its universal and in many aspects (indirectly) free of expense nature - it is also far from the status of pure public good.