

Abstract

More and more attention is paid in the academic debate to the issue of sub-state entities, represented by regional governments, as partially independent actors of international politics. This phenomenon, referred to as paradiplomacy, is particularly visible in the European Union, where since 1980s regional governments have been mobilising to gain direct influence on the shape of European politics. A regional government that acts as an agent of European politics may or may not be actively supported by its central government. This thesis tries to investigate the relationship between the direct representations of the Visegrád Group regions in Brussels and their respective national Permanent Representations. In the first chapter, I discuss the theoretical issues related to regional mobilisation in Brussels by referring to the work of researchers who deal with multi-level governance in the context of the European Union. In the second chapter, I present and justify the choice of research design, case studies, and semi-structured interviews as the main source of obtaining data necessary to answer the research question. In the third chapter, I included the analysis of the obtained information, and in the fourth chapter, the conclusions drawn from it. This research shows that direct regional representations to Brussels are, in the case of centralised Visegrád countries, dependent on the help and assistance provided by the national level representation. On the other hand, cooperation between regional and national authorities may be strongly influenced by the internal political conflict in these Member States.

Keywords

Paradiplomacy, regional mobilisation, multi-level governance, regional offices, cohesion policy, Visegrád Group, European Union, region, party politics, political conflict