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**REPORT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC
CONFERENCE “THE CRISIS OF A MODERN STATE”
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“The Crisis of a Modern State” is the title of the international scientific conference which took place on 24th and 25th September 2014 at the Institute of Political Science, the University of Wrocław. The participants of the conference representing the leading academic centres in Great Britain, Italy, Spain, and Poland surveyed the most important problems of the functioning of contemporary democracies.

The conference was inaugurated by the Pro-rector for Development of the University of Wrocław Professor Robert Olkiewicz. Professor Robert Alberski welcomed guests from home and abroad on behalf of the political science community of Wrocław. Then, the main organiser of the event Professor Robert Wiszniowski presented the idea of organising a two-day meeting. “We are undoubtedly witnesses of the changes which lead to the exhaustion of the old methods of political management and entail the need for a broader implementation of a modern sector public management based on intersubject relations,” said Professor Wiszniowski. “Hence the need for initiating the interdisciplinary international debate.”

The conference, with honorary patronage of the President of Wrocław, Rafał Dutkiewicz, has created conditions for not only presenting the research findings, but also exchanging the views and opinions concerning the condition of the state in its current form. The conference was possible thanks to the formula adopted by the conference organisers which linked the talks conducted during the four plenary sessions and the panel discussion in the form of so-called round table talks.

The first plenary session “Modern State. Theory and Practice”, chaired by Professor Robert Wiszniowski, started with a speech by Professor James Mitchell from the University of Edinburgh, who not only reconstructed the stages of forming the British statehood, but also elaborated on the chances and dangers related to the results of the referendum on Scottish independence. He considered the influence of the voting on the 18th September 2014 on the functioning of Great Britain and the whole European Union. In her speech entitled “The Theory of Research on a Modern State”, Professor Teresa Łoś-Nowak from the University of Wrocław synthesised the most important theoretical approaches concerning the role, the importance, and the prospects of the functioning of the modern state. She paid particular attention to the influence of the dynamic transformations of the international system and the shaping of its new subjects. Professor Patrizia Magarò from Università degli Studi di Genova presented the phenomenon of Italian regionalism. In

her article "The Dynamic of Italian Regionalism", she analysed the most crucial factors influencing its changing dynamics.

During the second plenary session entitled "Institutional Changes. Political Regimes and Party Politics", representatives of academic centres in Kraków, Kielce, and Toruń presented the results of their research. Professor James Mitchell chaired the debate. Professor Katarzyna Sobolewska-Myślik from the Pedagogical University of Kraków started the session with her speech concerning the contemporary phenomenon of the crisis of parties and party systems. The President of the Polish Political Marketing Association, Professor Agnieszka Kasińska-Metryka, analysed the role and the importance of the system transformation process of Spain for the dynamics of the current Spanish political scene in her article "The Spanish Way From Authoritarianism to Democracy". The last speech of the second session "The Porcelain Fragility of Authoritarian States", was delivered by Professor Roman Bäcker from the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Professor Bäcker (the President of the Polish Political Science Association) commented upon the current transformations of the functioning of authoritarian regimes. He discussed not only the most important theoretical approaches but also presented data enabling insight into the problem.

The third plenary session, "Political Communication, Social Dialogue and European Union", chaired by Professor Andrzej Jabłoński from the University of Wrocław, generated a lively discussion on the specificity and prospects of the Kaliningrad Oblast and the European Union. Professor Marcin Chełminiak from the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn was the first speaker of the session. In his article entitled "The Strength and Weakness of the Enclaves in the Geopolitical System of Europe. The Case of the Kaliningrad Oblast of Russian Federation", he focused on the possibilities of developing cooperation between the Kaliningrad Oblast and Poland. Dr Maciej Herbut representing the University of Wrocław, commented thoroughly on the most important projects concerning the rebuilding of the institutional system of the EU.

During the fourth session entitled "Modern State Fragility", two researchers presented their articles. After a short introduction by Professor Katarzyna Sobolewska-Myślik, Professor Javier Lorenzo Rodriguez delivered his speech. This researcher, representing Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, presented the influence of information and communication technologies on the condition of the modern state. He mentioned Spain, as an example, which enabled him to fully illustrate the problem. The first day of the conference came to a close with a speech by Professor Robert Wiszniowski entitled "From Nation-State to Post-Sovereign State. The Parameters of Change". Professor Wiszniowski, the organiser of the event, discussed ways of measuring the process of nation-state transformation.

During the second day of the conference, the round table talks entitled "The Crisis of a Modern State – Possible or Unavoidable?" took place. They constituted the opportunity to consider and compare approaches presented by theoreticians – researchers dealing with the functioning of modern states and practitioners – representatives of business community. The participants of the discussion led by Professor Robert Wiszniowski were Professor Katarzyna Sobolewska-Myślik, Professor Patrizia Magarò, Professor Roman Bäcker, Professor Teresa Sasińska-Klas, Professor Agnieszka Kasińska-Metryka, Professor James

Mitchell, and Professor Javier Lorenzo Rodriguez. Professor Teresa Sasińska-Klas, from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, not only discussed the prospects of the functioning of modern democracies, but also defined the most important challenges of the state in its current form. Professor Sasińska-Klas (the vice-president of the Polish Political Science Association) paid particular attention to the paradoxes of the communication process observed at state level. The speech by Rafał Szkop, a representative of the Employers' Association of Polska Miedź, was an important element of the debate. He discussed the implementation of the premises of sector policy, which are crucial from the perspective of the economic policy of a state. The discussion was ended by Professor Robert Wiszniowski who expressed thanks for participation in the round table talks. Moreover, he emphasised the importance of the debate for analysis of the causes of modern state transformations, as well as the possible scenarios.

The conference "The Crisis of a Modern State" was a summary of almost two years of research by Professor Robert Wiszniowski conducted as a part of the research project "The Crisis of a State. From the Traditional to the Contemporary Perspective on the Example of Catalonia and Scotland" (no 2012/07/B/HS5/03711), financed by funds of the National Science Centre. The conference will result in the publication of a monograph entitled "The Challenges of Representative Democracy", including written forms of the speeches delivered during the two-day meeting by leading political scientists from both home and abroad.