

## **Paradiplomacy EU-China**

Local governments across the world more and more actively participate in international relations. They open trade and cultural missions abroad, join international networks of cooperation, sign treaties and agreements with their partners from other countries. Their activity can be treated as a tool of foreign policy. This international involvement of local and regional authorities is sometimes referred to as “paradiplomacy”. Sub-national dimension is also a part of the European Union relations with China, one of the most important directions of European foreign policy.

### **Research problem and questions**

The main goal of the project is to understand a role that paradiplomacy plays in the EU policy towards China in the context of international “actorness” of European regions, political coherence of the EU external actions and policies as well as multilevel governance in globalized world.

This project aims at answering the following questions:

1. What is the intensity and scope of cooperation between European and Chinese regions?
2. What are the impacts of subnational actors on the EU foreign policy? Are they really „actors” in European relations with China and how effective is the „europeanisation” of their interest? Are regional activities important for the EU policy towards China?
3. What factors influence paradiplomatic activities of the European regions in China?
4. What are the goals of European regions in their relations with Chinese counterparts? To what extent they want to influence the policies on the national and European level?

### **Methods:**

In quantitative part of the study, data will be obtained through survey among 142 European regional authorities from 6 biggest countries (Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, Spain, Poland), as well as their websites review. The survey is going to be concise: we will ask if the region cooperate with China, in what form, how intensive and what are the reasons behind the cooperation.

Qualitative part of our research will be based on 6 case studies in regions, selected on the basis of the survey among the regions with the most intense relations with China. In each selected region the in-depth interviews with officials responsible for cooperation with China will be conducted. The interview scenario will be based on modified Kuznetsov analytical framework.

In the last phase of the project, in order to better understand the place of region-to-region cooperation in the framework of the EU-China relations, a few interviews with the EU’s officials in Brussels will be organized.