

Contents

Introduction: Basics of the functioning of Polish political system
(Jarosław Szymanek) 7

Part I. Historical, political and constitutional background

1. An outline of recent political history (*Bartłomiej Zdaniuk*) 21
2. The road to a new constitution (*Jarosław Szymanek*) 44
3. Characteristics of the Constitution of 1997 (*Maria Kruk*) 62
4. The basic principles of the political system (*Grzegorz Kuca*) 92

Part II. Democratic processes in action

5. Elections and electoral system (*Bartłomiej Michalak*) 113
6. Political parties and party system (*Bartłomiej Michalak*) 134
7. Political activity of the citizens (*Mikołaj Cześnik*) 160
8. Relations between government and opposition (*Zbigniew Machelski*) 178
9. System of governance (*Jarosław Szymanek*) 200
10. Quality of Polish democracy (*Zbigniew Machelski*) 218

Part III. Constitutional institutions

11. Institutions of direct democracy (*Piotr Uziębło*) 239
12. The legislative power: the Sejm and the Senate (*Jarosław Szymanek*) 256
13. The executive power: the President and the Council of Ministers (*Michał Bożek*) 276
14. The judicial power: courts and tribunals (*Lech Jamróz*) 301
15. Constitutional organs of law control and protection (*Krzysztof Prokop*) 325
16. Sources of law and the legislative process (*Monika Florczak-Wątor*) 346

Part IV. Spheres of politics

17. Religious policy: relationship between state and church
(*Wojciech Brzozowski*) 371
18. Economic policy: social market economy (*Adam Krzywoni*) 389
19. Local policy: local government (*Zbigniew Gromek*) 406
20. European policy: Poland's participation in the European Union
(*Aleksandra Kustra*) 425