

INTRODUCTION

The processes of formation of industrial structures in the global space proceed with various intensity, and often influence their institutional – especially financial and cultural – surroundings in various degrees. We assume that transformations of spatial structures are referred to the macro-, meso-, and microeconomic rules of economic activity development, applying to internally varied circumstances, which yield particular possibilities of development. As a consequence, the rules of economic development and the varied spatial circumstances affect the – frequently dissimilar – possibilities of transforming the structures of production and services activity, the institutional sphere, or the whole economy. This is exemplified in the presented papers, concerning the transformation of industrial structures and firms of various industrial branches.

Different directions of economic transformation are presented by authors from Russia and the Czech Republic. A. Jacobson, and the team of collaborators, (Irkutsk State Technical University) present selected problems of the transformation of Siberian industry in the post-industrial phase. Against the background of Siberian economy and its role in the Russian economy, the authors present the shaping of a new type of industrialization, connected with the exploitation of natural resources and development of new plants, satisfying the needs of the market. N.M. Syssoeva (Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Irkutsk) analyses the transformation processes and the changes in spatial organization of the Siberian industrial complexes in the context of the global financial risk. The author pays special attention to the directions of industrial restructuring, the changes in economic links between selected branches of industry, and the spatial changes. P. Ptáček (Palacky University, Olomouc) takes up the issue of foreign direct investments affecting the modernization of the Czech economy, including business services. On the background of positive and negative effects and the dynamics of development in the Central European countries, the author presents changes in the Czech economy, related to the emergence of technological and business centres and the distribution of modern products which affect the development of economic regions.

The European Union countries and the Eastern and Central Europe countries differ as to the conditions of transformation of industry and industry-related economy. This is illustrated by the article by T. Rachwał, K. Widermann and W. Kilar (Pedagogical University of Cracow), who conducted a multi-feature analysis of the influence of industry on the economy of European Union regional systems, including the dynamics of the production activities and the R&D potential. M. Miszczyński (Jagiellonian University, Cracow) describes the tendencies of shaping the idea of new economy on the basis of literature, and presents the transformation processes in the metropolitan area of Cracow. P. Lizak (Pedagogical University of Cracow) discusses the issue of development of the automotive industry in the Central European countries in the last 10 years, and the influence of the leading foreign corporations on the creation of new automotive industry centres.

The transformation processes in the economic system are also visible in the changes of functioning of many enterprises in the national and regional space. This issue is illustrated

by: the work of M. Chmurski and A. Wieloński (University of Warsaw), concerning the restructuring of a Polish rolling stock enterprise, Pojazdy Szybowe PESA Bydgoszcz SA; the paper by R. Matykowski and A. Tobolska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań), analysing the functioning of the plants of Swedwood Poland and Volkswagen Motor Poland, as well as their spatial links related to commuting; a review article by K.W. Krupa (University of Rzeszów), devoted to the organization of business networks and innovation in small and medium businesses; an article by P. Brezdeń and W. Spallek (University of Wrocław), concerning the effectiveness of corporate firms of good standing in the Dolnośląskie Voivodship; and the work by M.J. Nowak (University of Agriculture, Szczecin), describing the development of the Goleniow Industrial Park, which is seen as an example of the commune's active strategy.

Transformation of industrial structures are also reflected in the social structures. This is exemplified in the article by S. Kurek (Pedagogical University of Cracow), who discusses the issue of changes in the age-structure and the acceleration of the ageing process in the industrial areas, and in the paper by A. Winiarczyk-Rażniak (Pedagogical University of Cracow), concerning the availability of cultural services in Mexico.

The presented works point to the high currency and relevance, and varied level of advancement of research into the formation of spatial industrial structures and their surroundings, conducted in many Polish and foreign academic centres. This volume presents the results of research, supported by specialist literature, and reveals information on transformations occurring in spatial structures of a given scale; the research results are complementary and frequently open a way to new research fields, to be investigated by industrial geography.

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