

## INTRODUCTION

The growing globalisation processes influence the changes of individual economic sectors, including industry. In the information society phase the role of industry as a producer of the more and more modern products is increasing, which happens simultaneously to the continuous process of automatisisation and robotisation of technology. As a consequence, the role of industry in the economic structure of countries and regions as a labour market is decreasing together with the increase of connections level, appearing as a result of the continuous processes of industrial processes concentration in the form of powerful corporations and controlling broader markets. The appearing changes in the industrial structures require systematic work on undertaking new research problems and perfecting the analytic methods, which enable for explaining the processes of change of individual enterprises' activity, as well as spatial forms of its concentration. In the new market conditions there is also a need to foresee the directions of upcoming changes, which will serve the development strategies of both companies and spatial systems. The development of production work influences, in turn, the changes of the intensification of connections and quality of service institutions, especially the business surroundings institution.

This issue is being partially described in the results of research works presented in this tome. Firstly, there is a presentation of new research hypotheses and a proposition of the pattern of the analysis of the spatial structure of industry, which are connected to the rules of market economy. It is underlined that individual regional systems have often different conditions for shaping the industrial processes referring to modern and traditional industrial branches, or working for the needs of international, national or local surroundings (Z. Ziolo).

The variability of the industry development conditions is also pointed out by the work on the concept of complexity, shown in the changes of directions of economy and economic geography development as scientific disciplines, reaching to even more precise knowing of the functioning of enterprises, regional industrial systems, and also the self-regulating production systems (A. Mrozińska).

The modern processes of civilisation growth is also addressed by the changes of national industry, an evidence of which is the presentation of modern processes of spatial changes in the industry of Poland, changes in its potential in the regional system, and also reconstruction of historically shaped industrial regions (B. Domański).

In the process of corporation growth, an important part is played by the medium companies cooperating on a constant basis, which create selected production elements or provide different kinds of services based on a contract (A. Żur). The management centres are usually located on the grounds of economically developed countries, whereas the subcontractors are usually companies located in other countries, with lesser production, energy and work costs, which allows for increasing the economic effectiveness of the final product. An important

factor in the development of the innovative economic activity in the national and regional structures are also the increasing technology-production connections and organizing spatial systems, an example of which are various forms of cooperation, e.g. in the form of clusters, and also within other forms of cooperation of individual industrial centres and regions (W. Gierańczyk, A. Sadoch). An important role in the creation of economic growth is played by the business surroundings represented by financial institutions, direct and indirect influence instruments, which create positive conditions for the economic activity development and increase its innovativeness. Also social conditions are an important factor, visible in the growing prestige of people connected to economic work and developing entrepreneurship (P. Nowak). An important element of developing research methods of industry is creating new forms of industrial activity, which was described on the example of the off-shore industry, which will definitely be developed in the following years (P. Czaplinski). The dynamically developing traditional industry centres, especially those based on mining and metallurgy industries, must undergo serious restructuring in the new economic conditions, which influences the reconstruction of the industrial regions connected to them, which were shaped in the historical process of development (M. Tkocz). An attempt to present the overview of the research problems in the socio-economic geography in Poland and the Anglo-Saxon countries is presented in the last article, where attention was put to the changes in the research problem of the labour market functioning (D. Piróg). The volume is concluded with a note, wherein - in connection to the celebration of the thirtieth and fifteenth anniversary - there is a presentation of the main research problems described during the Krakow conferences on the structural changes of industry and services organized since 1985, and the results of which are published mainly in the Studies of the Industrial Geography Commission of the Polish Geographical Society (T. Rachwał).

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