

## INTRODUCTION

Social, economic and cultural development processes lead to the emergence of a new type of economy – one that is based on intellect and knowledge and is more competitive and dynamically developing. Knowing and understanding this process is necessary to determine its course in the past, in the present, but also to determine its further directions of change. This is made possible by continuous research aimed at learning more and more about the mechanisms of the ever changing processes, in order to control them, to systematically compensate for existing developmental disparities and to improve the standard and quality of life. We assume that development processes should be actively shaped in changing circumstances and circumstances determining social, economic, cultural and political change. This idea is referred to in the presented papers, in which authors analysed the conditions and factors of transformations in socio-economic structures in spatial systems of different scales. They show that modern spatial structures are at different levels of development and sometimes have been formed under different political conditions.

In modern economy, human capital is the most frequently mentioned factor that, in addition to knowledge and innovation, allows us to achieve a competitive advantage on the market. It is referred to as a derivative of education, qualifications acquired and practical skills. The current dynamic development of advanced technologies requires the inclusion of high-quality human capital in the process. With that in mind, undertaken was an assessment of the potential of human capital as a fundamental determinant of the development of Industry 4.0. The studies included indicators on the share of employment in the high-tech and knowledge-based services industry, the share of employment in high- and medium-sized technology industries, the participation of people with higher education in different types of industry and the diversity in this regard between Member States of the European Union in 2013 and 2018 (P. Pilichowska).

As mentioned, innovation is an extremely important factor in building a knowledge-based economy. It is introduced in all sectors of the economy. However, its specificity in the services sector is completely different from that of the manufacturing industry, as shown through the example of Poland (J. Dominiak).

Especially in the process of changing the management system, developing intellectual resources and building human capital of people capable of implementing new principles of economic development and social change, becomes an important problem. This issue has been illustrated by the implementation of market economy rules in the Republic of Kazakhstan. It was highlighted that the transition to an innovative economy, the creation and development of new managers, as well as the development of human and social capital, remain particularly important. They are an essential condition for increasing labour productivity and producing high-tech products. In the case of a spatially uneven distribution of human resources and the level of their qualifications,

measures are needed to increase coordination in order to improve the quality and level of human capital (G. Nyussupova et al.).

In modern economy there appear certain disadvantages for development. An example of this is the automotive industry which is one of the main branches of the Polish economy with a large share in generating gross value added and maintaining jobs. The favourable development trend has been disturbed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Against this background, an analysis of changes in the production volumes of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers and motorcycles was carried out; the preliminary losses of the automotive industry and the change in the structure of workers' wages in 2018–2019 were identified (K. Stojczew).

Economic integration processes have a significant impact on socio-economic transformations of border areas in particular. An example of this is the planning of a corridor aimed at the development and economic integration of the border areas of China, Mongolia and Russia. The initiator of the construction of the corridor is China, implementing the assumptions of its foreign policy. It was found that the main interest of Chinese capital is the pursuit for the acquisition and use of natural resources, including mineral and forestry ones. Small businesses, on the other hand, which are owned by smaller foreign capital rather than large corporations are developing slower (N. Sysoeva, V. Rudneva).

In presenting efforts to improve interregional cooperation between Siberian regions, attention has been drawn to the reduction in interregional cooperation, which negatively affects regional development and contributes to the widening of their spatial disparities. The paper draws particular attention to the lack of proper coordination and agreement between the levels of federal and regional authorities, as well as the lack of cooperation between regional authorities. One of the key problems was the removal of barriers to interregional cooperation and the gradual reduction of the growth of the centralisation of power (S. Violin).

In regional systems, the development of innovation in industrial activities is an important factor in socio-economic development. This principle is based on an analysis of the directions of transformation of the industrial structure of the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship (Poland) and the largest urban centres. An assessment of the level of concentration of the group's industrial activities – production – was used as the basis for identifying these processes. The results of the research indicate significant changes in innovation in large cities and the spatial structure of the voivodeship (P. Brezdeń, D. Sikorski).

The Rural Development Program adopted for the period 2014–2020 made it possible to intensify economic activation and rural development. With this in mind, the aim of the analysis was to study the development of economic activity realised under this program by the LAG "Beskid Gorlicki". It was found that the most funds was received by entities included in the construction section (19.4% of the total amount spent) followed by industrial processing (17.7%) while scientific and technical activities and other service activities were given 14.5% each (M. Ćwikła).

Social economy entities are also particularly important in discussing the process, as they are becoming a permanent and significant part of the economic landscape. Some of them form permanent and strong relationships with local communities, which is a manifestation of their social function (A. Majzel et al.).

The papers presented point to very diversified conditions of innovation processes, identify many barriers to development and point to the important role of human capital and decision-makers in shaping rational processes for the reconstruction of sector-spatial structures.

We encourage you to discuss and develop the outlined research issues and share your results in our journal.

*Zbigniew Ziolo, Wioletta Kilar*