

## INTRODUCTION

A basic characteristic of transformation processes are constant changes in the potential and spatial connections, functions of business entities and their impact on shaping their surroundings. These processes take place during the change in the relations occurring on different scales of spatial systems from the global and national scale to regional and local one. They are visible in terms of the intensification of trade and transport links, new opportunities for the development and impact of companies, as well as institutions, occurring in the geographical space. This research trend is referred to by the results of studies presented below, which point to selected spatial problems of economic, social and cultural connections, as well as the development of activities and functioning of companies, and changes in local systems.

A fundamental role in the global economic space is played by the relations of individual countries in terms of trade. It is an important factor influencing the economic activation of a given country and determining the intensification of its links with the international environment. This issue is referred to by considerations concerning the trade exchange of the German economy in the world space. A characteristic feature of turnover is a positive trade balance in terms of the value of trade turnover, while a negative one in terms of the flow of goods mass. Products requiring technical inputs (machinery and equipment, chemicals) are of dominant importance in terms of exports, while in the field of imports, less processed products, mainly fuels, raw materials and foodstuffs (Z. Ziolo, K. Woźniak, M. Woźniak). In order to strengthen spatial relations, social and economic mobility, which plays a key role in the European Union's policy, is crucial. This is made possible by different types of intermodal passenger terminals located in leading European cities. They give passengers the opportunity to change the means of transport or route in a short time and to combine long-distance transport services with public transport (B. Bodnár). In the ongoing processes of integration of world and international space, the development of air transport plays an important role. An illustration of this is the analysis of the impact of economic liberalisation on the regional spatial structure of aviation networks from Nigeria to West Africa (A.O. Oluwakoya, D.D. Ajayi).

In the world space there is a significant concentration of production of many products. This issue was presented based on the example of China, which has become a world leader in steel production. Since 2017, they have produced more than half of the world's steel, and in 2019 their annual production exceeded one billion tons. It was emphasized that such a high concentration of steel production in this country indicates that China can take control of the global market for this product (R. Matykowski, A. Tobolska). The basic impact on the development of companies' activities is their achieving economic success. In reference to the adopted assumption, the most important features of the new paradigm – the so-called four-leaf clover – were presented. Based on the example of ASTOR, it was found that the basic factors of the company's success are:

operational efficiency, brand popularity, unique organisational culture with humanistic values also taken into account (K. Kowalska). Legal and organisational instruments play an important role in the functioning of the industry. The issues were presented on the example of coal mining. The aim of this work is to determine the requirements for obtaining a concession for mining activities and to assess the conditions regarding the competences of mining supervisory authorities (P.M. Woroniecki).

The contemporary economic development of the city affects its spatial and functional changes, which take place as a result of revitalisation. Considerations in this respect are presented based on the example of the city of Szczecin (Poland), especially its port and industrial areas (J. Rudewicz).

An important issue for historical centres is to improve their quality and the development of tourism as an vital source of income. This is undertaken by the analysis and evaluation of tourist services provided to tourists in Krakow (Poland). Surveyed tourists stated that an important strength of their attraction to this city is the great friendliness and hospitality with which they are welcomed. They particularly highly value: catering services, accommodation, services in the field of entertainment, tourist information and transport accessibility (L. Mazanek, K. Borkowski, Z. Kruczek). Religious tourism is not only an important cognitive element, but it also influences the formation of spiritual attitudes of individuals. This is indicated by the results of research on the intensity of tourist traffic to the Museum of the Holy Father John Paul II Family Home in Wadowice (Poland). The authors report that in recent years the museum has been visited by more than 200,000 tourists a year, including 40,000 foreigners from more than 100 countries (F. Mróz, A. Krogmann, M. Nemčiková, D. Oremusová). Recently, fan tourism is also gaining more and more popularity and is inextricably linked with the shaping of tourist experiences. In the next article, the assumptions of the economics of experience were identified and applied in fan tourism (E. Nawrocka, J. Krupa).

Nowadays, an important research problem is to determine the impact of business activity conducted by companies on the change of natural conditions. Against this background, the paper presents the reporting of companies in this field belonging to the "fuel and gas" sector listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange. It was emphasized that the companies pay attention to the strength of their impact on climatic conditions. It was found that in the face of progressive climate change, the environmental awareness of companies is constantly increasing (M. Trocka). In view of the progressive degradation of the environment and the depletion of its resources, an important problem is to take pro-ecological actions as a result of the implementation of circulation activities. This issue was discussed based on the example of households of the Podkarpackie and Małopolskie voivodeships. The results of the research indicate that their circular behaviours are influenced by some socio-economic features (E. Szczygieł).

The intensifying COVID-19 pandemic is changing the conditions for the functioning and development of all areas of social, economic and cultural life. This issue is referred to in the work analysing students' social attitudes towards changes in the functioning of the university and the need to implement new methods of continuing the didactic process. It was found that a significant part of students quickly accepted new forms of remote teaching, but some of them did not adopt to this form, mainly due to limited technical and organisational capabilities (J. Hauke, E. Bogacka, A. Tobolska, J. Weltrowska).

An important method of reducing the growing disparities in the economic and social development of the national space is the intervention of the central authority. This issue is discussed based on the example of the Italian government's action to compensate for the accumulated disparities in the development of individual regions, as well as to assess the implementation of the measures taken (M. Noviello).

We hope that the presented works will encourage you to further explore this topical and important research issue. They will contribute to an increasingly precise understanding of the course of spatial transformation processes, the knowledge of which is necessary for rational control of these processes in social, economic, cultural and political activity.

We encourage you to discuss and share your research results in our journal.

*Zbigniew Ziolo, Wioletta Kilar*