

INTRODUCTION

Socio-economic and cultural transformations and technological and economic changes taking place under their influence create different opportunities for effective use of production and service resources of business entities and determine specific development opportunities for investment activities for business entities, households, as well as individual countries and local government units. The current directions and pace of development significantly disturb the negative consequences of the spreading COVID-19 pandemic. The intensifying pandemic is causing a socio-economic and cultural crisis, which is further aggravated by the legal and administrative instruments being implemented to limit its size and negative socio-economic effects. Unfavourable conditions for the development of economic activity and the functioning of society are also exacerbated by a sharp increase in energy prices on European and global markets, the increasing polarisation of the world space and the torn technological, capital-financial, raw materials, cooperative and market connections. As a consequence, there has been a decrease in the rate of economic, social and cultural growth as a result of the decreasing possibility of developing the activities of business entities. These new conditions have negative consequences and create new multiple problems that limit the development opportunities of companies, various sectors of economic activity and individual countries, regions and local systems. The new situation requires taking appropriate measures to limit the negative impact of the crisis on development processes, including the economic condition of economic entities, households and spatial systems. The actions taken must not only be aimed at restoring the economy to its pre-crisis state, but their main task should be to transform the economy and the economic activity of companies which, on the basis of science and the use of knowledge, will refer to the rules of functioning of the information society. In general, it should be assumed that in the conditions of a pandemic, business entities, general government institutions and society must adapt to the changing environment in order to be able to survive the times of crisis in the best possible economic and financial condition, to be able to respond to the new technological, organisational and legal challenges of the changing environment that await us.

To a large extent, the presented results of scientific and research works by representatives of various scientific disciplines refer to this trend.

This issue of the journal opens with reflections on the impact of the pandemic on changes in the behaviour of business entities (Z. Ziolo). The paper presents an attempt to construct a model that allows for a comprehensive approach to the impact of the pandemic on the behaviour of business entities and spatial systems. Attention was paid to the mechanisms of changes in the conditions for the development of companies' activities and the socio-economic situation taking place under the influence of the pandemic. It allows for a comprehensive presentation of the impact of the crisis on changes in the conditions of companies' operations, in the new socio-economic situation created as a result of the emerging pandemic. Subsequently, a partial empirical verification of the proposed

approach was carried out based on selected examples of the behaviour of the activities of industry and construction, selected companies and industrial sectors, including the automotive industry. In the next article, a team of authors (J. Kudełko, K. Wałachowski, D. Żmija, K. Szmigiel) present a new and partially already verified in their works concept of research devoted to socio-economic issues in the conditions of the spread of the pandemic and the resulting new challenges for the development policy of regional systems.

A particularly strong impact of the pandemic has been visible in the development of industrial activities. This topic was widely discussed in another study devoted to changes in the conditions of industrial activity and its impact on the change in the spatial structure of industry during the pandemic (P. Brezdeń). Addressing the issue of the possibility of developing industrial production in the European Union, in the conditions of the emerging pandemic, the impact of technical progress in some branches of industry on the implementation of the development concept based on the rules of industry 4.0 was presented (K. Nawracaj-Grygiel).

In addition to many negative social and economic effects on economic entities and spatial systems, the subsequent study analyses the pandemic as a stimulator of economic innovation (M. Zdun). This issue is noticed in the analysis concerning the assessment of the development of Şanlıurfa's (Turkey) manufacturing industry in the conditions of the pandemic, against the background of the previously posed questions – do crises offer opportunities? (M.S. Şahinalp).

The crisis related to the pandemic affects the behaviour of economic entities representing services sectors to varying degrees (J. Dominiak, A. Buczak). This issue was discussed based on the example of industry changes taking place in this area in the national and supra-local economy. Another team of authors (B. Gierczak-Korzeniowska, K. Szpara, M. Stopa), based on the example of the Podkarpackie Voivodeship (Poland), discusses the impact of the pandemic on changes in directions and intensity of tourist traffic in the regional system. During the pandemic, the function and importance of many tourist products for tourist traffic is changing, in national parks included, as indicated by another work (A. Niezgoda, E. Markiewicz). In this industry, start-ups are characterised by a certain resistance to the pandemic crisis (M. Olszewski). Research indicates that the pandemic and the related change in the intensity of tourist traffic have influenced qualitative changes in management in historical hotel facilities (W. Sadkowski, K. Sala) and the operation of catering facilities of Vistula Boulevards in Warsaw (Poland) (M. Kordowska, A. Poreda).

The pandemic has a significant impact on various sectors of activity, including the form and content of educational services (A. Świętek), changes in the effects of knowledge diffusion in cities (J. Kwaśny, A. Mroczek, M. Ulbrzych) and market behaviour of young people in new management conditions (A.I. Szymańska).

The presented works are interesting examples of the analysis of the impact of the pandemic on changes in the behaviour of companies in selected sectors of the economy and also open up new research fields for this issue. That is why we encourage readers to develop this issue and share their results with us in our journal.

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