

SELECTED SPHERES OF REGIONAL DIFFERENTIATION IN POLAND IN A PERIOD OF SYSTEM TRANSFORMATIONS

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Abstract: The presented article 'Selected spheres of regional differentiation in Poland in a period of system transformations' is an attempt to define and describe a social and economic position of regions, disproportion of their development and lack of harmony of developing processes in Poland. The number and location of foreign investments in Poland seems to confirm disproportions of regions' development. Most favorable situation was recorded in Mazowieckie, Katowickie and Wielkopolskie province. GDP per person is a coefficient that exemplifies differentiation of regional development's level. Ratio of maximal to minimal value of a GDP coefficient per person recorded in Mazowieckie province and Lubelskie province was 1 : 2,17. Analyzing the level of social and economic development of Polish regions one must take into consideration disproportions of average salaries and economic activities. A separate issue presented in the article a characteristic of labor markets and connected with them consequences. A structure of unemployment was presented in aspects of regions in Poland and other countries of the European Union.

Key words: region, disproportions of development, demographic potential, unemployment, national revenue

1. INTRODUCTION

A characteristic feature of Polish social and economic background is a considerable discrepancy between economic and social development of various regions. However a territorial discrepancy, that is considered an objective circumstance, occurs in each country. The recent events observed in the world's economy seem to confirm the fact that a scale and level of disproportions of the territorial development in global, continental, national, international and inter-regional aspect will become more evident (Korenik, 2003).

In Polish conditions a concept of the economic regions is associated with an administrative division of the country (without taking into consideration a number and size of provinces). This kind of attitude in spite of its simplification might be accepted,

because it is a region itself that creates a unique matrix, which becomes an integral part of an economic region system. An administrative division of Poland introduced after 1998 and a previous one valid until 1975 remain a model material of the research conducted on regions.

According to Z. Chojnicki and T. Czyż (2004) a pace of the regional development is generally influenced by the circumstances of development and various activating factors. The circumstances of the region development include factors and properties of regions that maintain an existing character and are poorly controllable in short periods. While the activating factors influencing development maintain their active character and remain more controllable, and their implementation is conditioned by the restructuring processes and dynamic development of the regions.

The main conditions of the regions' development are: situation of the population, structure of settlement network, condition of geographic surroundings, technical infrastructure and economic structure. The basic activating factors influencing the region's development in contemporary social and economic transformations in Poland include: development of institutional sphere of the market economy, business generating factors, innovations, social atmosphere and foreign investments.

The regional development, and its territorial differentiation, that took place in Poland during a period of transformations, strongly influences social and economic spheres of life. The presented article is an attempt to define and describe a social and economic position of regions, disproportion of their development and lack of harmony of developing processes.

2. DISPROPORTIONS OF REGIONS' DEVELOPMENT IN A PERIOD OF SYSTEM TRANSFORMATIONS

System transformations have influenced significantly the regional development processes. First years of intense transformations generated considerable changes in a structure of Polish economy. System transformations caused remarkable revaluation of a regional structure. Its consequence was providing new jobs and activating local labor markets. Big companies provide jobs for the smaller ones that in return provide different types of service. Small companies generate income that is spent on local markets. Influential companies from a 'List 2000' are located in 447 communities in Poland and are concentrated in the neighborhoods of big agglomerations of Warsaw (about 40 % of the general number), Kraków, Katowice and Poznań (about 9 % in each of them) and Wrocław and Gdańsk (about 7 % in each of them). The number and location of foreign investments in Poland in 2003 seems to confirm disproportions of regions' development (Figure 1). Over 30 % of the total number of investments introduced in 2003 was located in Mazowieckie province and about 15 % in Katowice region. About 9,1 % of investments was located in Wielkopolskie province, 7,8 % in Dolnośląskie province, 6,0 % in Łódzkie province, 5,4 % in Pomorskie province and 5,3 % in Małopolskie province. During a fifteen year period of economic transformations the mentioned above provinces benefited from generating new business centers and economic enterprises. However one might observe some changes of a status of Katowice region considered one of the best developed regions in Poland in the 70-ties. At present the region suffers from

losing its former development base and needs restructuring of its economy. The provinces located in the north – east part of Poland are considered poorly developed (Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie, Lubelskie and Podkarpackie provinces). It means that the peripheral provinces will include a considerable part of the country and their geographic location will not differ from that developed in the recent years.

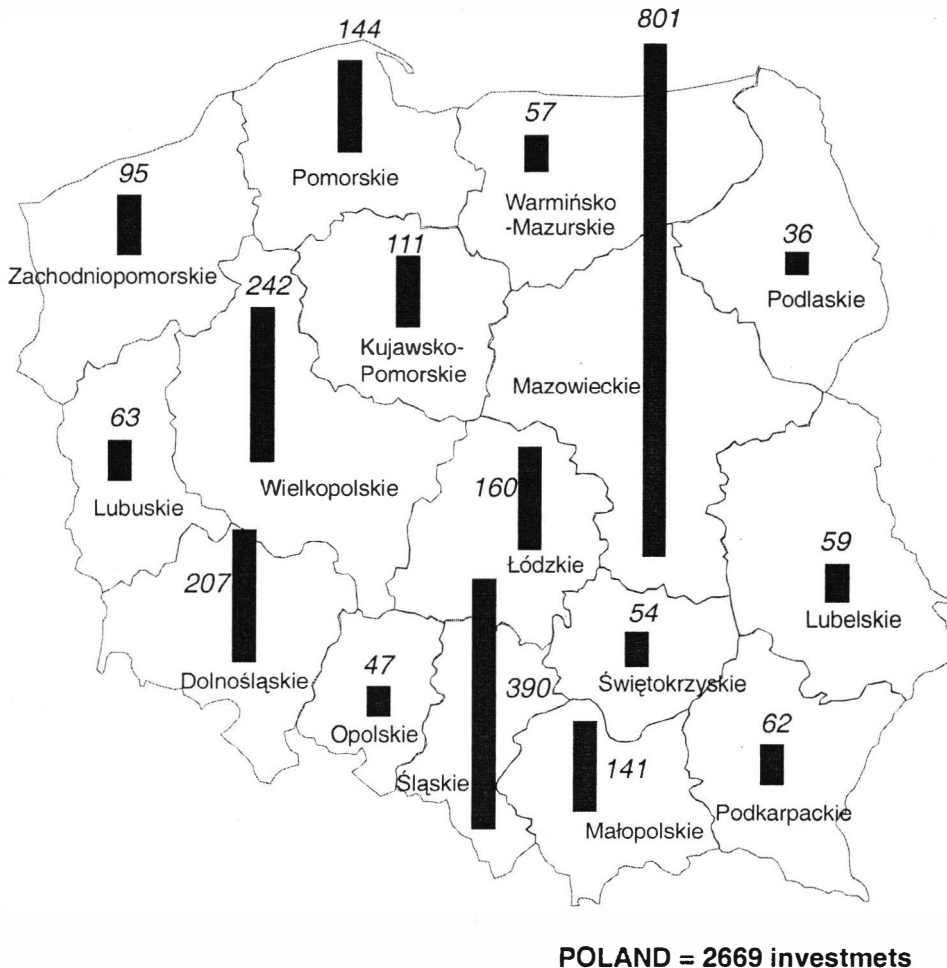


Figure 1 Numer of direct foreign investment in provinces of Poland in 2003

Disproportions of regions' development and the level and dynamics of GDP measured between 1995 and 2002 show considerable territorial differentiations (Table 1). In the analyzed period the highest level of GDP was recorded in Mazowieckie province (41.9 %). The province increased with 4.1 % its contribution to GDP. However the lowest level of GDP was recorded in Podlaskie and Świętokrzyskie province. Opolskie province and Lubuskie province decreased their contribution to GDP with 0.5 % and 0.3 %. Satisfying achievements were recorded in Śląskie, Wielkopolskie and Dolnośląskie province. However one might observe some tendencies concerning

generating of GDP in the mentioned provinces. Śląskie province recorded some decrease of its contribution to GDP with 2.0 %, Dolnośląskie province recorded no significant changes and Wielkopolskie province recorded increase of GDP with about 0.6 %.

Table 1 Share of provinces in generating GDP between 1995-2002 (Poland = 100 %)

Province	1,995	1,996	1,997	1,998	1,999	2,000	2,001	2,002
Dolnośląskie	8.0	8.1	8.0	7.7	7.9	8.0	7.8	7.9
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	5.4	5.1	4.9	5.9	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.9
Lubelskie	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0
Lubuskie	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3
Łódzkie	6.4	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.2	6.2
Małopolskie	7.3	7.4	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.5	7.2	7.3
Mazowieckie	16.3	17.6	17.6	19.1	19.6	19.9	20.3	20.4
Opolskie	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3
Podkarpackie	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.9
Podlaskie	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4
Pomorskie	5.6	5.5	5.5	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.7
Śląskie	15.7	15.2	15.2	14.1	13.9	13.8	13.6	13.7
Świętokrzyskie	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8
Wielkopolskie	8.4	8.6	8.6	9.2	9.1	9.3	9.3	9.0
Zachodniopomorskie	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.4

Source: Gross Domestic Product in provinces between 1995 – 2000. GUS Warszawa, Statistic Annuals, years 2002 – 2004. GUS, Warszawa. Own research

GDP per person is a coefficient that exemplifies differentiation of regional development's level (Figure 2). The studies show there were considerable differences between the provinces in comparison to the country's average in 2002. Ratio of maximal to minimal value of a coefficient of GDP per person recorded in Mazowieckie province and Lubelskie province was 1 : 2,17.

The lowest level of GDP per person was recorded in four provinces located along the east – north border (Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie, Lubelskie and Podkarpackie province) and also in Świętokrzyskie province. In 2002 the mentioned provinces generated 15.8 % of total GDP while in 1995 they generated almost 17.0 %. Analyzing a coefficient of GDP per person one might observe some similarities such those in Zachodniopomorskie province and Pomorskie province and also Wielkopolskie and Dolnośląskie province and differences as those between Śląskie and Mazowieckie province and Świętokrzyskie and Opolskie province.

It is interesting to analyze the regional differentiation in aspects of GDP per person in Poland but it is also interesting to analyze the issue in aspects of comparison Poland's situation to European Union's standards. According to Eurostat data¹ the majority of Polish provinces is considered one of the poorest European Union's regions (Figure 3). State revenue generated by Polish provinces is one third of an average of 25 European countries.

Lubelskie province with revenue of 6,762 Eur per person is the poorest region of the European Union. The best situation was recorded in London with 66.744 Eur per person. A person from Lubelskie province generates 32 % of a gross national potential of an average person who lives in one of the European Union's country. An average Londoner generates 315 % of revenue (Figure 4).

¹ A. Stojewska, 2005, Polish regions need EU help. Rzeczpospolita, nr 22 from 27.01.2005

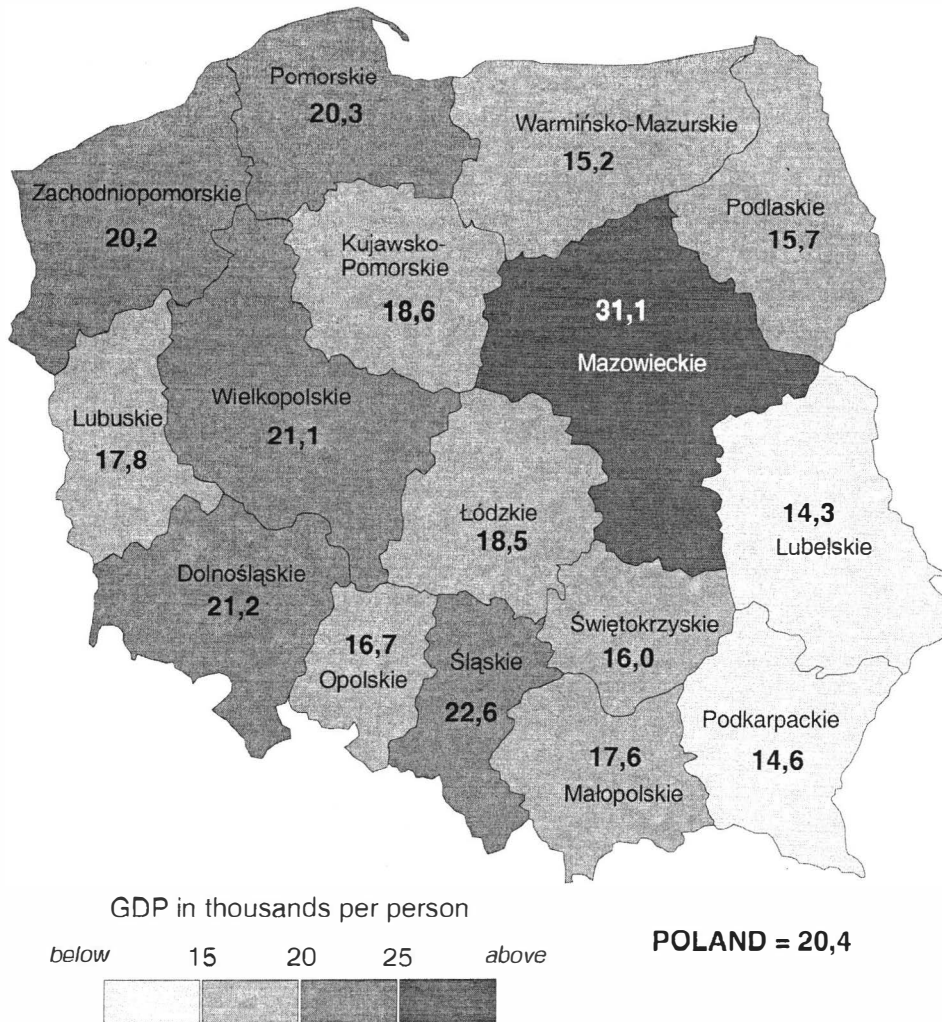


Figure 2 GDP per person in provinces of Poland in 2002. Source: Statistic Annuals 2004, GUS Warsaw 2004

Five Polish provinces – Lubelskie, Podkarpackie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie and Świętokrzyskie are the poorest regions of the European Union. Opolskie province was also placed in the last ten. The richest Polish region is Mazowieckie province. Revenue in amount of 14,714 Eur per person is almost 70 % of the Union's average. Differences between regions become more evident both in Poland and the European Union's countries. The source of backwardness of regions located in the north and east part of Poland is their economic structure. It is dominated by agriculture that is not as effective as in other parts of Poland. Foreign investments do not influence and animate local labor markets. Another factor influencing the present situation of Polish regions is a decreasing number of industrial centers that is a consequence of developing services and implementing new technologies in production processes. Between 1998 and 2002 the

total number of the employed in a national economy decreased with 5 % while the number of the employed in industry decreased about 32 %.

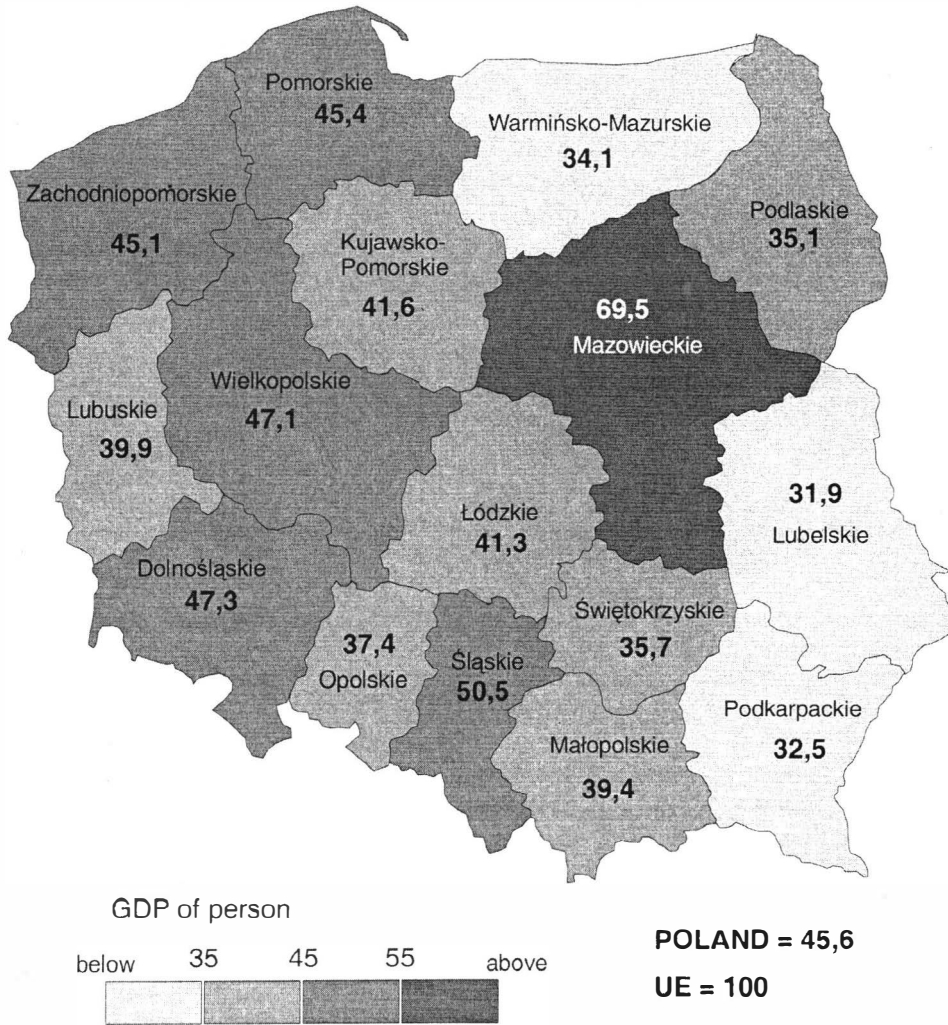


Figure 3 GDP per person in provinces of Poland in comparison to European Union's countries. Source: Rzeczpospolita nr 22, 27th of Jan 2005

The records show that the number of the employed in industry decreased in all regions (Figure 5). The most alarming situation was recorded in Świętokrzyskie province (42 % decrease) and Łódź province (38.6 %). The mentioned regions used to be the centers of traditional industry with domination of obsolete technologies. The most favorable situation was recorded in Mazowsze (22 % decrease) and Wielkopolska (28 %) the regions characterized by domination of agglomerations with concentrated modern industry.

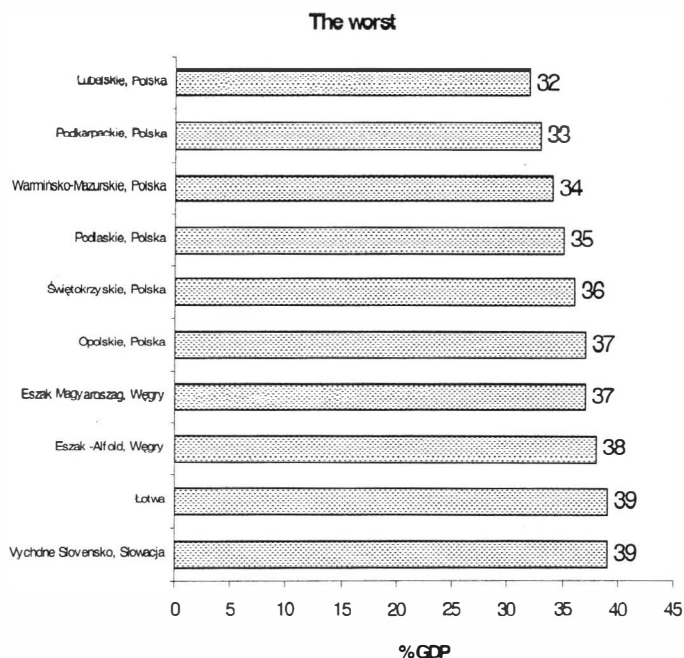


Figure 4 The best and the worst regions in the European Union in % GDP, UE=100, data from 2002

Analyzing the level of social and economic development of Polish regions one must take into consideration disproportions of average salaries. The tendency observed in that field shows slow and constant progress. In 1999 an average salary was 1,789 zł and in 1st quarter of 2004 it was 2,332 zł (30.4 % increase). Salaries in Poland differ in various regions of Poland (Figure 6). The worst situation is recorded in Podkarpackie with an average salary 1,930 zł while in Mazowsze (central Poland) an average salary is 3,065 zł. Average salaries below the level of 2,000 zł are in Lubelskie province 1,985 zł and Lubuskie province 1,886 zł. An average salary in Śląskie province is 2,453 zł, Pomorskie province 2,308 zł and Dolnośląskie province 2,230 zł. Differences of salaries' level are caused by a structure of economy. The regions with well developed agriculture and poorly developed services and industry offer the worst financial conditions.

The employees in Mazowieckie province are best paid due to the fact they are considered best qualified and effective. Numerous foreign companies are located there and salaries of the members of the boards are much higher than average Polish salaries. This fact influences the statistics significantly. According to recent research it will be very difficult to level the salaries. It is hard to imagine that the investors will change their minds and decide to develop their companies in the east part of Poland instead of Upper or Lower Silesia since it is infrastructure and logistic factors that influence location of investments.

Economic activity might be also expressed by a number of investments (Figure 7). The number of investments differs in particular regions of Poland. Agglomerations and the regions of their location have a dominating position in Poland. In 2003 five regions: Mazowieckie, Śląskie, Wielkopolskie, Dolnośląskie and Małopolskie province

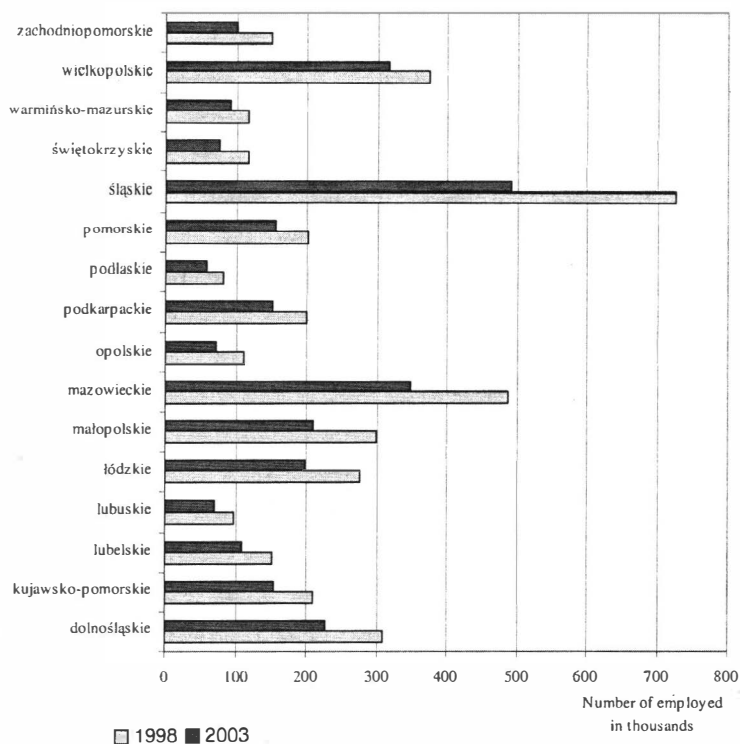


Figure 5 Number of the employed in industry in Poland's regions between 1998 – 2003. Source: Based on data provided by Bank Danych Regionalnych Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego in Warsaw, www.stat.gov.pl

concentrated over 55.0 % of a total number of investments registered in REGON. The mentioned above provinces cover an area of 112,874 km² (36.0 % of the country's area), concentrate 50.2 % of a total number of population including almost 54.0 % of urban population. Social and economic activities are observed in the area characterized by a high level of urbanization. However concentration of activities in the regions located in north Poland confirms the thesis of differentiation of regional development. It proves existing differences not only between metropolis centers and other regions of Poland but also between the regions neighboring the European Union's countries and those located in east of Poland.

3. SELECTED ELEMENTS OF DEMOGRAPHIC POTENTIALS

In order to analyze social and economic activities one must take into consideration the basic economic coefficients and a human factor. It is connected with the fact that in classical economy work was considered one of the crucial elements of production and human resources an influential factor that modified geography of a country, local and regional demand and supply, service, infrastructure and global development of a region

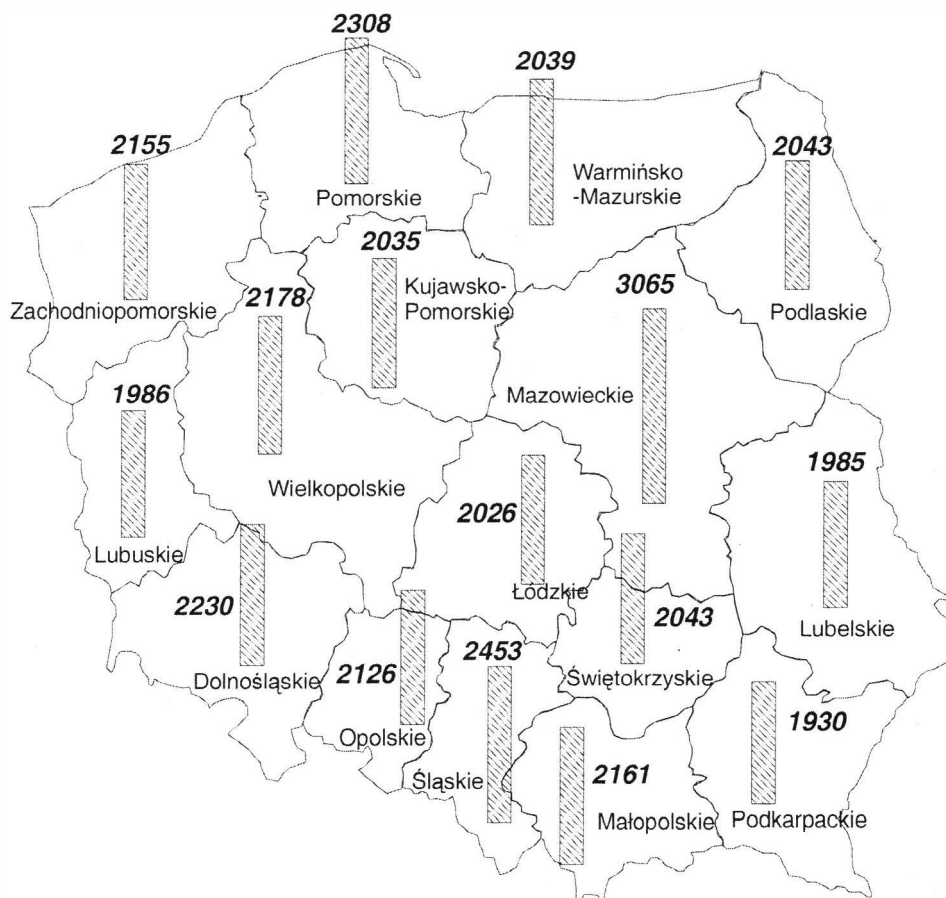
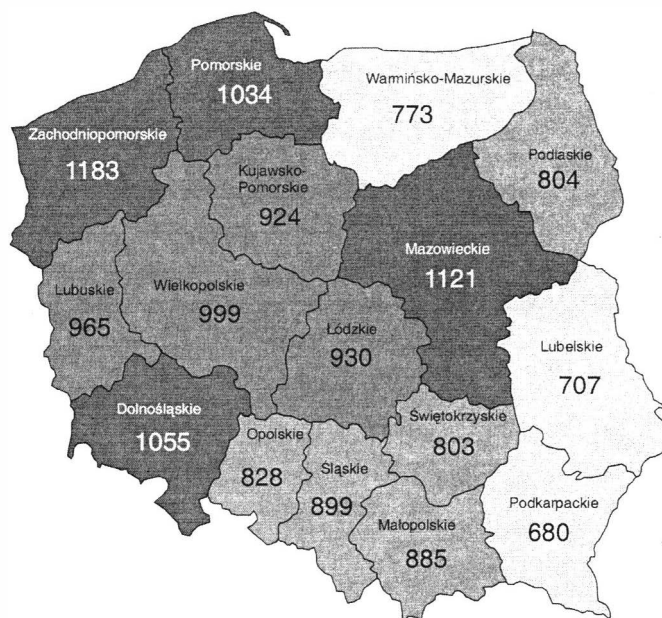


Figure 6 Average salaries in provinces of Poland in a first quarter of 2004. Source: Based on data provided by Bank Danych Regionalnych Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego in Warsaw, www.stat.gov.pl

(Liszewski 1990, Korenik 2003, Raiman 1998). Demographic and economic processes are very complex and should be analyzed in aspect of cultural and social conditions.

Population's structure was influenced by developing processes from the past. In Polish conditions it was a process of urbanization and industrialization that took place in the 20th century. Between 19950 – 2000 the greatest increase of population was recorded in the fifties. Similar situation was recorded in the seventies in a period of rapid urbanization. In the nineties the situation was stable with a minimal increase of population. On the turn of the 20th century (between 1999 – 2003) the number of Poland's population decreased with 444,000 of people.

Analyzing the discussed problem one must remember that a population's structure is also characterized by inter-regional differences (Table 2). Differences of density of population are considerably high 1 : 6.47 between Śląsk province and Warmińsko-Mazurskie province.



Companies registered in REGON per 10.000 of people



Figure 7 Economic activity of Poland's regions in 2003. Source: Based on data provided by Statistic Annuals 2004, GUS, Warsaw 2004

Table 2 General demographic characteristics of Polish regions in 2003

Province	Population (in thousands)	Population (in %)	Population in cities (in thousands)	Population in cities (in %)	Birth rate per 1000 people	Density of population	Coefficient of econo- mic load
Polska	38,190.6	100	23,513.6	61.6	-0.4	122	58.9
Dolnośląskie	2,898.3	7.6	2,061.9	71.1	-1.4	145	55
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	2,068.1	5.4	1,280.9	61.9	0.4	115	58.3
Lubelskie	2,191.2	5.7	1,021.4	46.6	-0.7	87	64.6
Lubuskie	1,008.8	2.6	649.6	64.4	0.3	72	55.9
Łódzkie	2,597.1	6.8	1,682.8	64.8	-3.5	143	58.7
Małopolskie	3,252.9	8.5	1,623.0	49.9	1	214	62
Mazowieckie	5,135.7	13.4	3,322.2	64.7	-1.2	144	59.6
Opolskie	1,055.7	2.8	553.7	52.4	-1.2	112	57.4
Podkarpackie	2,097.2	5.5	849.2	40.5	1.2	118	64.7
Podlaskie	1,205.1	3.2	710.8	59	-0.8	60	65.7
Pomorskie	2,188.9	5.7	1,483.2	67.8	0.2	120	57.8
Śląskie	4,715.0	12.3	3,720.2	78.9	-1.4	382	54.6
Świętokrzyskie	1,291.6	3.4	589.6	45.6	-1.6	110	63
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	1,428.9	3.7	859	60.1	1.7	59	59.4
Wielkopolskie	3,359.9	8.8	1,930.8	57.5	0.8	113	57.6
Zachodniopomorskie	1,696.1	4.4	1,175.3	69.3	0.5	74	55.1

Source: Statistic Annuals 2004, GUS, Warszawa 2004

The regions characterized by the greatest density of population are concentrated in south of Poland (Śląskie and Małopolskie province) however it is important to remind that the mentioned regions represent various social and economic structures (Śląskie province with dominating industry and Małopolskie province with agriculture). A structure of population in a regional aspect is measured by a density of population and is strongly connected with urban agglomerations.

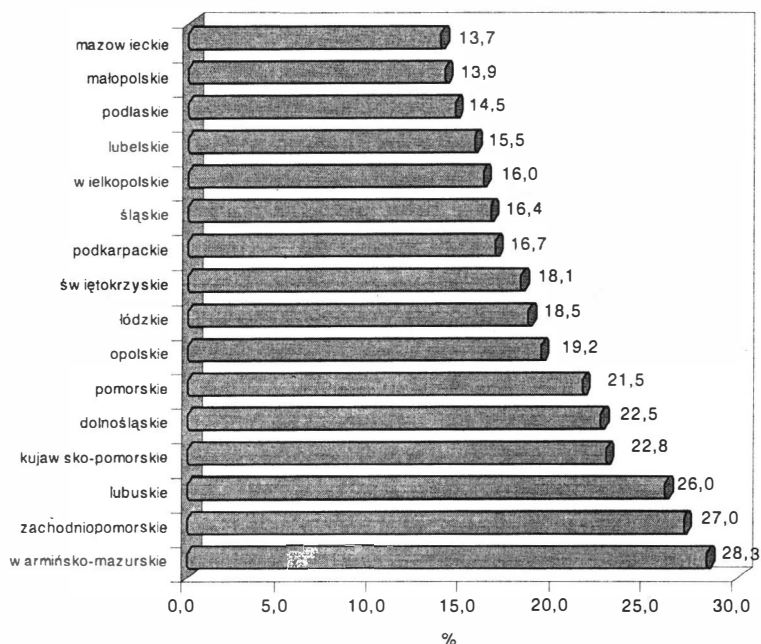


Figure 8 Unemployment rate in provinces of Poland in December 2004. Source: Based on data provided by Bank Danych Regionalnych Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego in Warsaw, www.stat.gov.pl

One of the most unfavorable factors influencing the present situation in Poland is unemployment. The size and dynamics of unemployment in Poland's regions and local labor markets are influenced by various factors. The most influencing factors are a deep economic recession connected with system transformations, inflexible labor markets, decreasing number of jobs and developing of 'grey sphere' of economy. A characteristic feature of labor markets in Poland was a considerable decrease of a number of the employed in Poland between 1989 – 2003 and their territorial differentiation (Figure 8). The described situation was generated by economic conditions in former decades such as a great share of collective sector in agriculture of regions located in north – west Poland and bankruptcy of former state farms and local industry centers that limited a number of jobs. Other factors influencing a difficult and complex situation of Poland are prices of real estate and rent prices, unsatisfactory level of gratification, passive attitude of a part of Polish society, poor condition of labor resources in coal-mining and agriculture sectors. The situation in Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Zachodniopomorskie, Lubuskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie provinces is considered most difficult in Poland. Every third

professionally active person in Warmińsko-Mazurskie province is unemployed. Also a situation in Zachodniopomorskie province is considered very serious. Almost 191,000 people out of 1,679,000 are unemployed. Every fourth person in Lubuskie province is unemployed (26 %). The best situation is recorded in Mazowieckie province. Only 13,7 % of people are unemployed. Similar situation is recorded in Małopolskie province.

The number of the unemployed in Poland is the highest in the European Union's region (fig. 9). Situation on Polish labor markets is considered most serious and complex among all the European Union's countries. In 2003 51.2 % of Poles were officially employed however the records compared to those from 1998 show 7.8 % decrease. A coefficient of employment in Poland is the lowest in the European Union however a pace of economic development is faster than in other European Union's countries.

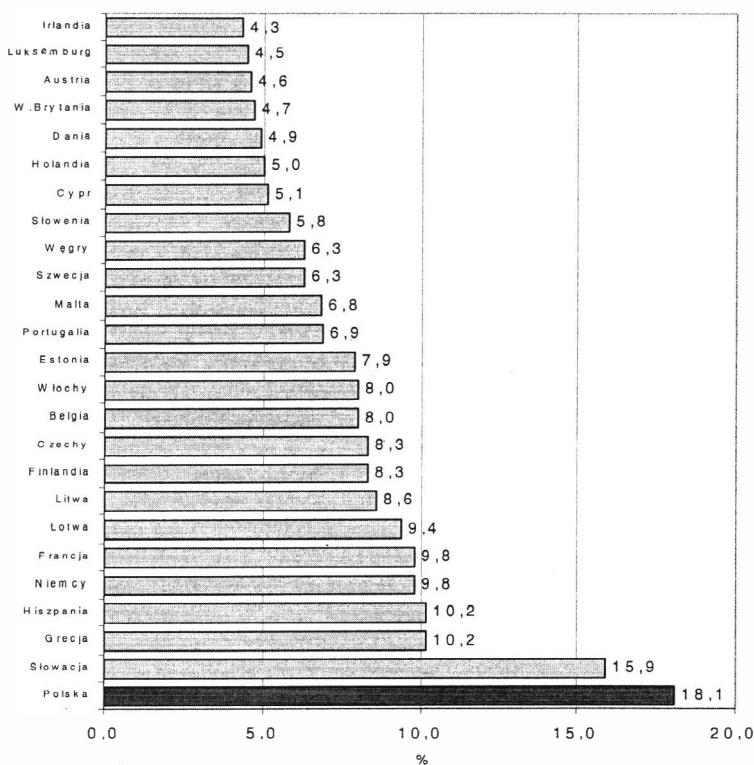


Figure 9 Unemployment in EU in March 2005. Source: Eurostat

Thanks to an access to the European Union Polish people are allowed to work abroad legally. In 2004 about 960,000 of Polish worked in the European Union's countries (Figure 10). The majority of them was employed in Germany (about 38.0 % of a total number of the employed abroad), the Great Britain (7.9 %), Italy (4.0 %) and Ireland (3.5 %). Experiences of recent two years show that in spite of former fears Polish employees are not a threat to a situation on foreign labor markets in countries that look for well qualified employees from Central Europe including Poland.

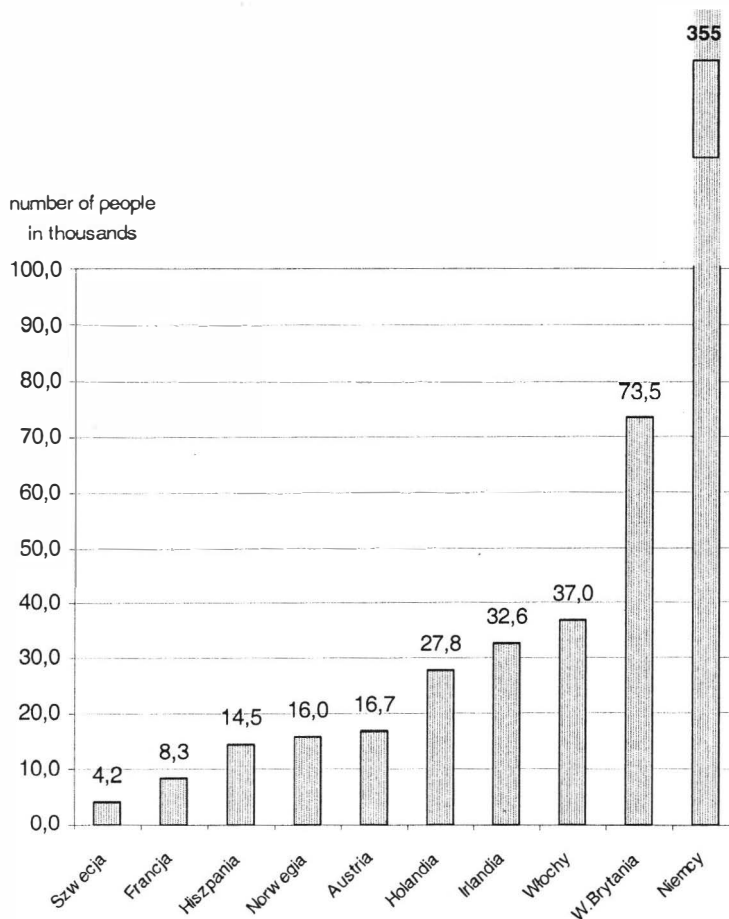


Figure 10 Number of Poles employed abroad in 2004. Source: data provided by Ministerstwo Gospodarki i Pracy 2005

4. FINAL REMARKS

Most favorable situation is recorded in Mazowieckie, Wielkopolskie, Małopolskie, Dolnośląskie and Śląskie province. Their strong position is influenced by the following factors: high level and effectiveness of a production sector, potential of human resources and considerably well developed infrastructure concentrated in the neighborhood of metropolitan centers. Provinces located in east of Poland (Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Podlaskie, Lubelskie and Podkarpackie province) are considered poorly developed due to their level and effectiveness of social and economic development. They are characterized by ineffective agriculture, poorly developed services and industry and poor quality labor resources.

Multi – functional regions are characterized by fast development processes. They attract best qualified people and offer well developed infrastructure that create most favorable conditions to effective policy of development.

Recent transformations of development factors and connected with them location criteria seem to fortify a division between strong and weak regions. 'Strong' regions thanks to their location gain advantage over other districts and 'weak' regions are made remain backward and suffer stagnation. An advantage of 'strong' regions over the 'weak' ones has been observed also in well developed countries in spite of intense efforts in order to improve the unfavorable conditions.

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Wybrane dziedziny zróżnicowania regionalnego w Polsce w okresie przekształcenia systemowego

Resume

Cechą charakterystyczną polskiej przestrzeni społeczno-ekonomicznej jest występowanie w niej dysproporcji w rozwoju gospodarczym. Należy jednak zaznaczyć, że zróżnicowanie przestrzenne będące zjawiskiem obiektywnym, występuje we wszystkich krajach. Uwzględniając występującą specyfikę rozwoju regionalnego zarówno w zakresie warunków jak i czynników, współczesne zróżnicowanie przestrzenne w Polsce jest wynikiem nawiązywania się sytuacji społeczno-gospodarczych w układzie historycznym. Do oceny tego zjawiska wykorzystano dostępne mierniki, które wskazują na skalę występującej dysproporcji w rozwoju regionalnym.

Podstawowym miernikiem najczęściej stosowanym w praktyce do oceny rozwoju regionów jest wielkość PKB (w różnych przekrojach). Interesującym zagadnieniem jest nie tylko określenie rozpiętości między najbiedniejszymi i najbogatszymi regionami

kraju, ale rozpatrzenie tego zjawiska na tle Unii Europejskiej. Przykładowo stołeczne województwo osiągnęło w 2002 r. 69,5 % poziomu średniej bogactwa Unii, jeśli uwzględnić realną moc nabywczą złotego. Na samym dole rankingu europejskich regionów, ale także w odniesieniu do średnich dla kraju, znalazły się województwa: lubelskie, podkarpackie, warmińsko-mazurskie, podlaskie, świętokrzyskie.

Innym zjawiskiem obserwowanym w Polsce jest zmniejszenie roli przemysłu w całej gospodarce na rzecz wzrostu znaczenia usług oraz szerszego zastosowania osiągnięć nauki w produkcji. Zjawisko to ma także wymiar przestrzenny. Największy spadek zatrudnionych w przemyśle odnotowano w woj. świętokrzyskim, małopolskim, łódzkim. Konsekwencją takiego stanu rzeczy jest m.in. wzrost bezrobocia i jego regionalne zróżnicowanie. W najtrudniejszej sytuacji, uwzględniając skalę bezrobocia, od dłuższego czasu znajdują się mieszkańcy województwa warmińsko-mazurskiego, zachodniopomorskiego, lubuskiego i kujawsko-pomorskiego. Bezrobocie jest efektem nałożenia się wielu niekorzystnych czynników ekonomicznych, demograficznych czy też politycznych.

Interesującym problemem wpływającym na ogólną sytuację społeczno-gospodarczą regionów jest struktura pracujących według sektorów ekonomicznych (pracujący w rolnictwie, rybołówstwie i leśnictwie oraz przemyśle i budownictwie, a także szeroko pojętych usługach). Badania jakie przeprowadzono wskazują, że województwa wschodnie charakteryzują się generalnie dużym udziałem pracujących w rolnictwie; zatrudnienie w przemyśle i budownictwie dominuje głównie w województwie śląskim, opolskim oraz lubuskim. Natomiast zatrudnienie w usługach, które uznać można za czynnik dynamizujący rozwój regionalny, w obecnej chwili dość wyraźnie uwidacznia się w województwie mazowieckim oraz regionach zachodnich.

Dokonując analizy zróżnicowania poziomu rozwoju w realiach polskich, na uwagę zasługują dysproporcje występujące w przeciętnych wynagrodzeniach. Zaznaczyć należy, że generalnie choć powoli, one rosną. O ile bowiem w 1999 r. średnia pensja wynosiła 1 789 zł., to w I kwartale 2004 r. wzrosła ona o 30,4 % do poziomu 2 322 zł. Najgorzej zarabiają mieszkańcy Podkarpacia, najlepiej mają mieszkańcy na Mazowszu. Podczas, gdy na Podkarpaciu przeciętne wynagrodzenie wynosi 1 930 zł., to na Mazowszu 3 065 zł.

Na uwagę zasługuje fakt, że w Polsce najwyższą konkurencyjnością i poziomem rozwoju charakteryzują się województwa: mazowieckie, wielkopolskie, dolnośląskie, pomorskie i śląskie; swą pozycję zawdzięczają: wysokiemu poziomowi i efektywności sektora produkcyjnego, potencjałowi zasobów ludzkich, stosunkowo dobrze rozwiniętej infrastrukturze, silnie skoncentrowanej na terenie ośrodków metropolitalnych. Wyraźnie najsłabszymi ze względu na poziom życia są woj. świętokrzyskie oraz woj. tzw. ściany wschodniej.