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Introduction

The processes observed in the modern world are characterised by various kinds of changes, often of a rapid and concurrently multidirectional (turbulent) nature, which results in a considerable increase in the level of uncertainty in all the areas of social-economic life. This relates to the fact that spatial development shows a constantly increasing complexity, which is a result of an increase in the degree of openness of social and economic life, with deepening specialisation, widening multi-subjectivity, as well as differentiation in functional-spatial arrangements. The openness of socio-economic life leads to an increase in population mobility, goods transfer and accelerating dynamics of information civilization, which results in new standards of behaviour challenging the current systems of values. Increasing scientific and professional specialisation develops society's creative abilities, enabling the utilisation of more advanced technology. Specialisation directly affects improved quality and competitiveness, forcing far-reaching reforms in the spheres of education, production organization and public services. Since not all spatial units adapt to these dynamic changes in a similar manner, this causes an escalation of disparities in their development level. This differentiation is deepened as a result of polarization caused by various degrees of spatial elements' susceptibility to the absorption of modern achievements of human activity. Consequently, the phenomenon of differentiation in the level of socio-economic development is observed in contemporary public space. The concurrent empowerment of the society of particular spatial elements (regions, subregions, local units), means that they are more interested in creating development processes.

In this issue of "Regional Journal" the reader will find a collection of interesting scientific articles devoted to the current issues and problems of local and regional development, cities and regions, spatial development in contemporary realities, regional policy, knowledge economy on a regional level, public administration, as well as creativity and innovation.

Wishing you pleasant reading, we hope that the findings presented in this publication will become an inspiration for further discussion and research devoted to regional development.

Stanisław Korenik, Piotr Hajduga