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**COMPETITIVENESS OF THE EU REGIONS
AS A CHALLENGE FOR THE LISBON STRATEGY
AND FOR THE REGIONAL POLICY IN THE PERIOD
2007–2013. ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURAL FUNDS'
IMPACT IN SELECTED FIELDS OF INTERVENTION
(R&D AND INFORMATION SOCIETY)**

Abstract. The paper attempts to elaborate on the issue of the competitiveness of regions in the framework of the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy. It deals with theoretical aspects of the region's competitiveness, goals of the UE regional policy, as well as with the Lisbon Strategy and the actions planned in the UE budget for the 2007–2013 period. It depicts the most important goals of the cohesion policy in the period of 2007–2013, namely: faster economic growth and higher employment in all the EU regions. The paper also presents the fundamental assumptions of the National Development Strategy 2007–2015, which constitutes an attempt, on the part of Poland, at intensification, of activities envisaged in the Lisbon Strategy. In addition authors evaluate the impact of EU structural funds intervention on the sphere of research and development as well as of the information society.

Key words: competitiveness of regions, the Lisbon Strategy, the UE regional policy, goals of the cohesion policy in the period of 2007–2013, the National Development Strategy 2007–2015.

1. INTRODUCTION

The competitiveness of regions has become an important domain of the regional policy, particularly in the international dimension. The global competition necessitates the recognition and evaluation of external determinants not only on the scale of national economies but also is increasingly becoming a challenge from the perspective of region's economies. The differences in the development level and in the competitiveness of regions constitute both an important problem and a strategic challenge for the regional development policy. This issue is reflected

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in the activities of the European Union, which attaches growing importance to increasing the competitiveness of its regions. The issue is present, and significantly so, in the UE regional Policy as well as in the fundamental document pertaining to the development of the European economy, namely The Lisbon Strategy. Poland, in implementing the European cohesion policy attaches great importance to the competitiveness of its regions. This fact is corroborated by a horizontal document – the National Development Strategy 2007–2013. Authors present the results of their quantitative analysis of the impact of structural funds on both the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy and the development of R&D and information society in Poland. On the basis of their research authors conclude that, the limited scope and results of structural funds intervention in the fields of R&D and information society constitute a challenge for the development of the knowledge-based economy.

2. FACTORS DETERMINING COMPETITIVENESS OF THE REGION

The concept of the competitiveness of the regions emphasizes these elements that determine the quality of life of residents, the conditions of conducting business operations and building of the competitive advantages of enterprises, particularly the ability to attract foreign investors, as well as other factors. The regional dimension of competitiveness encompasses two elements: interregional differentiation and the size of the market. Differences in productivity and in innovativeness between regions lead to regional inequalities, that can be deemed as the manifestation of the competitiveness of individual territorial units.

One of the most frequently quoted definitions of the region's competitiveness is the formulation created by the experts of the European Commission, according to which region's competitiveness is defined as "the ability to produce goods and services which meet the test of international markets, while at the same time maintaining high and sustainable level of incomes" According to the said definition competitiveness of a region boils down to the ability of achieving, in a sustainable and efficient way, progressively higher incomes and employment indicators in the conditions of international competition" (http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm#). (Piotrowska-Trybull 2004, pp. 17, 20).

Competitiveness of a region refers to a sustained ability to withstand – in various competitive configurations –the pressure of other competing regions. It represents the said region's advantage over -or disadvantage- in relation to those other regions. High level of the region's competitiveness (its advantage) is determined by unique characteristics, factors and conditions that exists in a region, and at the same time do not exists – or exist to a lesser degree in - other regions that constitute the analyzed region's competitive environment. On the other

hand, low level of competitiveness results from such characteristics, factors and conditions in the analyzed region, that make it stand at disadvantages in relation to other main regions. In other words, the said characteristics constitute the region's weaknesses and development barriers. „Competitiveness of regions can be also construed as a process of „subjective” competition on the part of the public authorities. The competition can be perceived as either „direct” or „indirect” one. The later case can be understood as a presence (or creation) of regional environment for companies operating in the region, environment that allows to achieve competitive advantage based on factors that remain outside of the companies' control. Indirect competition of the region is expressed and measured by competitive capabilities of the companies located in that region. Direct competition of gminas, cities or regions together with the attendant policy of direct competition on the part of public authorities, should be construed as rivalry between territorial units that vie for benefits of various kind, such as: tapping financial resources, attracting external investors, retaining capital in the region, hosting agencies and governmental institutions, hosting and organizing international events, etc.; generally speaking for high quality of life and socio-economic development” (Wierzbicka 2002, p. 369).

“The differences in the course of socio-economic processes between regions result from: existing structure of resources, the degree of concentration of these resources, past development and the region's image. The said differences determine the level of the region's attractiveness, which in turn impacts future competitive position. Positive results of the economic activity depend upon accessibility of resources and the degree of their activation, which in turn stem from the inhabitants' involvement in socio-economic activity. Social support for the changes that allow for the region's adaptation to modern economic processes constitutes an increasingly important development factor. The existence of developmental differences between various regions, determines their competitiveness vis-a-vis other entities of the same type.” (Piotrowska-Trybull 2004, p. 19). Among the factors that are actually present in regions, and which determine region's competitive potential are also:

a) **Diversified economic structure**, that consists of branches and enterprises capable of engaging internationally in a competitive struggle in the field of production and turnover. The presence of external demand for the goods and services produced in the region constitutes an important premise of the region's competitiveness. Particularly, the growth of exports stimulates the regional economic activity. Dependent on the structure of exported products, there is a possibility of income growth in the region. The ability of the industrial sector to compete on foreign markets will be evidenced by the share of the region's exports in the nation's exports or the share of the region's exports in its sold industrial production. Such indicators point out to the degree to which individual re-

gions are able to withstand the international competitive pressure in the conditions of accelerating liberalization of the global trade;

b) **Investments** – domestic and foreign, public and private. Competitiveness of a region is related to investments through a feed-back mechanism. Higher investments lead to increased competitiveness, which in turn results in higher inflow of investments thanks to improved investment attractiveness of the region. The chief motivation behind domestic and foreign enterprises' investment activity is the maximalization of profits and improvement of the company's competitive stance. To that aim investors seek localization that, thanks to specific qualities, will amplify existing their existing competitive advantages. In numerous cases, the selection of a given localization is based on a confluence of few qualitative and quantitative factors. The whole set of factors which influence the volume of investments in the region is defined as an „investment climate”. Among the most important features of such a climate are: advantageous localization and communication connections, the absorptive potential and size of the market, labour costs, the opportunity to take over vacant productive, warehousing and office space, the relations between the company's partners and a given region, activity of the region's community (penchant for changes, willingness for risk-taking), transparent regulations and embeded traditions in the domains of production, services and trade. Certain role is also played by the structure of the tax system, potential absorptivity of the market and access to such assets as natural resources, labour force or technical infrastructure;

c) **Technical infrastructure** – efficient transport system, telecommunication system, water and electricity supplies and others. Nowadays, particularly significant for the shaping of region's competitiveness is the telecommunication and information-technologies infrastructure, one that involves acquisition, transmission and processing of information in the increasingly narrowing time span;

d) **Social infrastructure** – educational, healthcare, social protection systems, and others. Regarding education, the factors which have the highest impact on the level of region's competitiveness are: higher education and various forms of live-long education. The quality of the educational system and hence the level of educational attainment determines . i.e. the quality of labour force;

e) **Research and development activity** – scientific and research establishments, research units, universities and others academic institutions. Access to technological knowledge and the presence or highly skilled personnel are becoming increasingly important as a criterion in enterprises' localization decisions. Existence of such factors is conducive to the creation of innovations, and thereby strengthens the competitive advantages of the region;

f) **Resources of the natural environment.** Self-government, in cooperation with the local community, should aim at creating the region's image as of a place endowed with a high quality of environment and conducive to taking

residence, working and relaxing. This will foster the production of „ecological” products and services, will contribute to the heightened interest in „green” technological processes, and consequently may lead to the widening of the circle of consumers of the said goods and services as well as to the lowering of the production costs. Positive image of the region imprinted in the awareness of current and prospective customers will strengthen the competitiveness of the economy. Additionally, the presence of specific assets such as landscapes, climate, culture and history, which uplift the region’s competitiveness may form a foundation of building competitive advantage on the development of tourism;

g) **Business environment institutions** – agencies of local development, economic chambers, guarantee funds, incubators of entrepreneurship and others. Their impact is of an indirect nature, since they amplify the influence of a part of above-mentioned factors on the region’s competitiveness. These institutions participate in the shaping of conditions for the economic units, by creating a climate conducive to the development of entrepreneurship. Such a climate influences the directions and pace of the economic units’ development, which in turn accelerates the development of a regional economy and improves the quality of life of the inhabitants. Important tasks belong to the local authorities which may coordinate the cooperation of the institutions described in this paragraph.

Summing up, it’s necessary to define the term: „competitive region” here. Such a region is characterized by relatively high level of economic efficiency coupled with sufficiently high level of satisfying existing demand for labour, which means that the growth in labour productivity doesn’t take place – at least in the longer run – at the expense of jobs. „Competitive region” achieves high incomes thanks to the highest possible “exploitation” of existing potential, particularly human capital. The general effectiveness of a region depends on its economic structure. The region is the more competitive the higher number of people works in the most efficient branches of the economy. Under the circumstances of an open market, region must be capable of attracting investors to such sectors or of creating new jobs in those sectors on its own. We can also describe the competitive region as a one, “which, in the environment of a market economy creates beneficial climate for the development of entrepreneurship and of innovativeness, by empowering enterprises to achieve high economic efficiency, and which effects the inclusion of the existing labour market resources into the economic activity, with the resultant improvement in the level and quality of life in a region” (Piotrowska-Trybull 2004, pp. 22, 42).

3. UE REGIONAL POLICY 2007–2013

European Union faces presently a great challenge in terms further development of the regional policy in the period 2007–2013. The said challenge stems on one hand from the materialization of the Economic and Currency Union inside the Community, and on the other from the inclusion of new Eastern and Central European countries, ones that reveal significant developmental backwardation. The decline in the rate of growth, increase in unemployment and intensified global competition, have ultimately led to re-formulation of the regional policy goals. As of today, the said policy aims at balancing the reduction in disproportions of territorial development, which per se is becoming a factor conducive to development, with promotion of the territorial development and improvement of the regions' competitiveness.

By supporting competitiveness and ability of independent development of regions, regional policy has resulted in promoting economic growth of the whole country. In such a way economic development of a state results from the development of its constituting parts, as opposed to the former period, when regional development was perceived as a derivative of the nation's high economic growth. Modern approach to the regional development emphasizes, as a fundamental direction of regional policy, the focus on strengthening competitiveness. This means a shift of hitherto prevailing approach to a regional policy, one which formerly accentuated the equalization of the regions' development level. Upgrading the competitiveness of regions' economies is regarded as a foundation of their sustainable and balanced development.

The guiding principle, which defines the cohesion policy and its instruments in the 2007–2013 period, is faster economic growth and higher employment in all regions of the European Union. Within the framework of that policy, old and new member states will not be treated separately. The procedures will be simplified, and financing will focus on the most needy regions of the member states. In the period discussed, the investments in programmes of regional development and in inducement to create new jobs will amount to 308 billion euro – which is hitherto, the largest amount transferred via instruments of a cohesion policy. It will be disbursed within the framework of three entirely novel objectives: (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/object/index_pl.htm):

Objective 1 – convergence. The essence of this objectives involves propagating conditions conducive to growth and of factors that lead to the actual levelling of backwardation in the least developed member states and regions. In the European Union of 27 states, this objective covers - on the territory of 17 member states - 84 regions, populated by 154 million, with the GDP per capita lower than 75% of the UE average, as well as 16 regions populated in total by 16.4

million, where the level of GDP exceeds that threshold only marginally, regions covered by phasing out assistance, on account of the “statistical effect” of the UE enlargement. Funds available for the “convergence” objective amount to 251.1 billion Euro, which amounts to 81.5% of the total resources. The distribution of these funds looks as follows: 189,6 billion euro for convergence regions, with 12.5 billion euro set aside as a reserve for regions of the phasing out transitional assistance as well as 61.6 billion euro for a Cohesion Fund that covers 15 member states.

Objective 2 – regional competitiveness and employment. Apart to the convergence of regions, the objective aims at strengthening competitiveness and attractiveness of regions, as well as at increasing employment, doing so in a dual way. First of all, development programmes aiding regions in forecasting and propagating socio-economic transformation through innovations and promoting knowledge based society, entrepreneurship and environmental protection, as well as through improvement of the accessibility of the said regions. Secondly, the support will serve to increase number of jobs and improve their quality, both by adjustment of employees to changes and by investments in human capital. In the UE-27 168 regions, inhabited by 314 millions, are eligible for assistance. Among these regions 13 (inhabited by 19 million people), are phasing – in areas which receive special financial allocations on account of their previous status as Objective 1 regions. An amount of 49.1 billion Euro – of which 10.4 billion earmarked for phasing – in regions – accounts for mere 16 percent of assigned resources. This objective covers regions located in 19 member states.

Objective 3 – European territorial cooperation. Intentions behind this goal are to strengthen trans-border cooperation through local and regional-level initiatives, international cooperation aimed at integrated spatial development and interregional cooperation and turnover of experiences. Population of border zones amounts to 181.7 mln people (37.5% of the total UE population) regions and all EU citizens are covered by one of the 13 existing areas of international cooperation. 7.75 billion Euro (2.5 per cent of the total) expenditures for that goal will be divided in the following way”: 5.57 billion euro on trans-border activities, 1.58 mld euro on international activities and 392 mln euro na interregional cooperation.

Main changes in the policy vis a vis regions and in cohesion policy, compared to the 2000-2006 period (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/object/index_pl.htm):

a) Focusing resources on renewed Lisbon Strategy, through economic growth and employment growth, hence stimulating commitment to the strategy’s implementation on regional and local level;

b) Introduction of modernized structural policy, coupled with espousing more strategic approach;

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- b) Introduction of modernized structural policy, coupled with espousing more strategic approach;

c) Simplification and streamlining of procedures, i.a. through cutting the number of instruments from six to three, introducing new proportionality principle (one which ensures reduction of the red-tape), reducing the number of programming stages from three to two, accepting of national principles of determining eligibility in place of community level regulations and also increasing the scope of responsibility of member states and regions, as well as improving transparency of their management of funds. For the period 2007–2013, three new instruments of regional policy were created with the purpose of supporting regions and member states in elaborating proper and effective method of the management of funds and in better utilization of financial engineering (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/object/index_pl.htm):

a) JASPERS (Joint Assistance in Supporting Projects in European Regions) is intended to assist the development of partnership among European Commission, European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in order to cumulate expertise and to aid regions and member states in preparing large projects;

b) JEREMIE (Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises) is an initiative of the European Commission and of the European Investment Bank in cooperation with European Investment Fund, that aims at improving access of micro-enterprises and SME's to financing in the EU regions;

c) JESSICA (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas – European Commission's initiative, undertaken in cooperation with the European Investment Bank, and Council of Europe Development Bank in order to promote sustainable investments in the urban areas.

4. THE LISBON STRATEGY

“The Lisbon Strategy is the sole comprehensive programme of upgrading the competitiveness of the EU member states, one that consists of a set of economic and social reforms. It's implied as an obligation to “refresh” the Union in the economic, social and environmental sphere, that is at transforming the EU economy into the most competitive, knowledge-based economy in the world, an economy capable of: maintaining sustainable growth, creating greater number of “better” jobs and maintaining social cohesion.” (Radło 2002, p. 56).

The Lisbon Strategy has been accepted and scheduled for implementation, by the leaders of 15 member states at the Lisbon Summit in March 2000. It's shape has been determined by three fundamental trends, all of them clearly discernible in the concluding two decades of the 20th century. Firstly, widening gap between Europe and the United States, evident in many spheres, particularly in the quality of life, dynamics of economic growth, scientific research and in the

military capabilities. For the European leaders the example of dynamically developing American economy constituted a main challenge, therefore the "Lisbon documents" frequently articulate the goals to catch up and overtake the United States by 2010. In the period of the formulation of the Lisbon Strategy the threat of losing competitive position vis-à-vis other, than the US, economic areas, was not yet visible. Nowadays, considering possible future modifications and amendments of the Lisbon Strategy it is unavoidable to analyze the phenomena taking place in the Asian economies, particularly those of China and India.

Second phenomenon, which determined the shape and goals of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000, was a dynamic development of entrepreneurship based on modern technologies, including internet, and optimism tied to the so-called new economy. According to statistical data, intangible assets have begun to play an increasingly important role in value creation.

Third challenge faced by the authors of the Lisbon Strategy came from predicted, dramatic demographic shifts. The decline in the continent's population is forecasted to take place up to 2020, while, as of 2050, the working age population will shrink by 18 percent and population over 65 years old grow by 60 percent. According to the European Commission's estimates by 2015 the rate of economic growth will slow down, solely on account off the aging of the European population, by 1.5 percentage points, unless radical reforms are implemented." (Pawłowicz 2005, pp. 13–16).

The reforms scheduled for implementation within the framework of the Lisbon Strategy, fall into five categories: (Radło 2002, pp. 56–57):

a) Strengthening the economic and social foundations by: completing of the internal market programme, intensifying the competition on the markets, reducing the tax burden (particularly for people earning low wages), creating stable macroeconomic environment, assuring the economy's openness, redirecting public expenditures towards undertakings conducive to long-term economic development;

b) Facilitating diffusion of telecommunication technologies and information technologies in the economy by: increasing competition on the telecommunication markets, introducing better regulations of the internet-based trade, as well as upgrading skills in the field of information technologies;

c) Upgrading innovativeness by: promoting cooperation among the EU member states in the sphere of research, establishing the European Research Area, placing heightened emphasis on basic research, increasing effectiveness of public expenditures on research and development, strengthening cooperation between scientific and research institutions on one hand and the enterprises on the other, as well as improving access to venture capital for enterprises that implement modern technologies or establishing an European patent;

d) Investments in the human capital by: strengthening the educational system and vocational training, supporting activities aimed at stimulating population's occupational involvement, strengthening links between schools and enterprises and aligning the labour market with new economic trends, or finally by modernizing the European social model so as it supports both professional activity and constant upgrading of skills;

e) Strengthening of entrepreneurship and creating new enterprises thanks to the financial markets' reform and improvement of the access to capital (including venture capital), simplifying regulations of economic activity and of tax codes as well as promoting entrepreneurship.

As we can discern, the goals of the Lisbon Strategy and those of the regional policy overlap to a large extent. In both cases, they underline the significance of scientific research and development for the economic growth, employment and social cohesion. Tapping into the "regional" knowledge, innovative potential and cooperation between economic units, academic institutions and science and research institutions is of fundamental importance for ensuring competitive outcomes for the regions. For the regions grasping the new economic opportunities, created by the information society, and widening of the scope of knowledge on the local level could constitute a turning point due to resultant increase in innovative capacities. Strengthening of the regional scientific research and technological development potential, with the particular focus on the knowledge transfer to business facilitates the achievement of sustainable, integrated regional and local development, by mobilization and intensification of endogenous potential.

"Full range of competitiveness factors, as perceived from the perspective of the Lisbon Strategy, encompasses such elements as: economic situation (GDP per capita level and its growth dynamics, labour productivity, inflation, dynamics of employment, labour costs, stability of the public finance); employment (employment rate, wage differentials between males and females, taxation of the labour force, life-long education, job security, level of unemployment); innovativeness and research (expenditures on education, expenditures on research and development and the structure of these expenditures, internet access, graduates of the technological studies and of science faculties, number of patents); economic reforms (prices differentials between states, telecommunication costs, electricity costs, and costs of gas, structure of the following markets: telecommunications, electrical energy, state aid, markets' integration as evidenced by interest rate differentials, interest rates); social cohesion (incomes differentials, threat of poverty level, regional differences in unemployment, percentage of "drop-outs" - people who finish education before high-school exit examinations, level of long-term unemployment); environment (emissions of greenhouse gases, energy intensity of economies, transport structure, air quality in urban

areas, pollution and waste and their disposal, utilization of renewable energy sources, biodiversity).

“At present it’s evident that ambitious goals of the Lisbon Strategy will not be achieved by 2010. On the first stage of the strategy’s implementation, Europe, instead of catching up with the United States, has lost ground. In the European Commission’s report of 2004 four areas, which constitute the biggest threat to the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, were emphasized. Among those threats are: dubious condition of the public finance, insufficient actions towards employment growth and competitiveness growth, as well as insufficient actions for assuring sustainable economic growth. These areas are wide enough to encompass majority of actions and measures of the strategy’s implementation. Additionally, the serious decline in the transposition of directives accepted within the framework of the Strategy is being revealed, indicative of the national protectionists tendencies’ gaining upper hand over actions aimed at the promotion of common good” (Pawłowicz 2005, p. 21).

5. THE RENEWED LISBON STRATEGY

In 2005 the number of priorities was reduced while the excessively ambitious indicators were either dropped altogether or brought into line with reality. Two of the priorities of the renewed strategy are:

- a) Stimulating innovativeness of the European economy.
- b) Employment growth.

Strategy stipulates employment growth through, i.a. increased expenditures on research and development, including the stimulation of SME’s innovativeness and of innovation on regional and local level. It’s still dependant on the earmarking by individual countries of 3 per cent of GDP on research and development. As of today, in Poland these expenditures stand at mere 0.6% of GDP, and have been declining in recent years. Strategy aims also at directing the state aid at the development of human capital, including among others initiation of vocational training, stimulation of labour markets, development of educational systems etc. Strategy also espouses the goals of the Goteborg Strategy, one related to the so-called sustainable development. The latter strategy pertains to such type of economic activity that maximally protects natural resources. Public investments related to the environmental protection had been clearly directed at the development of modern technologies.

Employment growth strategy relates to the problem of stimulating the economic growth in the European Union, by resorting to instruments of the public support, particularly in the case of investments in infrastructure, research and science. Strategy adverts also to the necessity of modernizing the expensive

social protection and social security systems. It also points to the need to improve both, the flexibility of the labour market regulations and mobility of employees on the said markets. Strategy aims also at further liberalization of the common market.

Numerous commentators acknowledge that the renewed Lisbon Strategy is still not effectively implemented. There are many reasons for that. Firstly, the strategy doesn't yet constitute a sufficiently coherent planning document. The lack of the strategy's coherence had been indicated already in Kok's Report of 2004, which evaluated the effectiveness of the strategy's implementation. According to experts quoted in the report, the multitude of diverse, or even mutually exclusive goals leads to problems with their implementation by member states. This stems from the lack of harmonization in certain important market segments, and also from insufficiently efficient consultation and implementation mechanism of individual economic and social policies on the EU level (Centre for European Reform 2007, pp. 10–14).

Secondly, implementation of strategy hinges on a goodwill of national governments and on their determination to reach individual goals of the Lisbon Strategy. Also on the side of EU institutions there is visible lack of sufficient commitment and of political will. This is attested by insufficient support of the EU budget for the goals of the Lisbon Strategy. Additionally, this is connected with lack of consistency in EU activities, as exemplified by the problems with liberalization of services sector in Europe.

The Services Directive was, according to the provisions of the Lisbon Strategy, to serve as one of the main instruments of both accelerating the rate of the economic growth of the EU economy, and of creating new jobs. The final shape of the said regulation differed from the initial proposals, chiefly due to the objections voiced by the most influential member states, i.a. France and Germany. The weakness of the implementation of the political strategy discussed here is related to the objection of certain states to the excessive coordination of EU economic policy. This stems in turn from the willingness to protect the interests of domestic electorate, which are sometimes contradictory with the goals related to the pan-European interest.

Because of that, the Lisbon Strategy was based on the methodology of „soft” coordination of European policies, that is on so called open coordination method. That method involves only indication of relatively generalist directions of actions and voluntary implementation of the undertaken obligations (Centre for European Reform 2007, pp. 2–18).

In the Strategy of Employment Growth, numerous instruments were embedded aimed at strengthening its implementation. Among those, are stronger commitment of the EU budget to the co-financing of goals, more pronounced role of the European Commission in relation to detailed systematization of development

priorities and of actions delegated for implementation by the national governments. Among other measure, the modification of the structures of ministries responsible for the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy goals in every single member states, methodically unified national programmes of the said goals' implementation, simplified form of reporting the progress in implementation of national programmes to the European Commission, etc. However, the open coordination method continues to be the fundamental instrument of implementing the strategy, which means that the responsibility, for the said implementation was left, to the large extent, to the member states.

Experts clearly point out to the remaining problems with the implementation, which can threaten also the realization of the second "edition" of the Lisbon Strategy. The report published by the Brussels-based Bruegel Institute, reveals the flows of coordination of undertaken policies among individual states¹. The clear political responsibility for Strategy's implementation is lacking both on the EU level. and in the individual member states. (Bruegel Institute 2006, pp. 6–29). National Reform Programmes, which are principal documents which constitute the foundation of the strategy's implementation by the member states, are prepared on the basis of considerably differing methodologies. Moreover, the guidelines on preparation of such documents issued by the European Commission are often ignored.

6. POLAND AND THE LISBON STRATEGY

Poland can be held as an outstanding example of the weaknesses related to the Lisbon Strategy's implementation. Sixth report on implementation of the strategy by the member states, prepared by London-based Centre for European Reform, ranks Poland among "villains" (Centre for European Reform 2006, pp. 3–15). Of the thirteen spheres analysed in the report, our country has ranked last in terms of progress in strategy's implementation in the following categories: scientific research, transport, financial services, incentives for establishment of new companies, competition policy, counteracting unemployment, modernization of the social protection and of environmental protection. In none of the analyzed categories did Poland stand as a leader. Therefore, the inescapable

¹ In the ranking of the Brussels-bases Bruegel Institute, on a 1-12 scale, the majority of states, were assigned scores above 6 when the commitment to Lisbon Strategy's implementation is concerned. The evaluation covered the commitment of national parliaments, social partners and of the civic society to the implementation of the assumptions of the National Reform Programme. Estonia was awarded the highest score (11 of 12), followed by nine states (Austria, Dania, Spain, Poland and others) with the score of 7 points. The lowest scores were assigned to Belgium (3 points), Germany (2) and Great Britain (2).

conclusion is that Poland couldn't find attractive development goals in any of the Lisbon Strategy's priorities, the goals to be supported extensively in order to dynamize the economic development².

In response to the globalization process and to the challenges posed to Europe by the renewed Lisbon Strategy, Poland has to conduct modern development policy, one that will allow to bridge the development gap vis-à-vis the richest states of the European Union. Such a policy is bound to build on these characteristics of the Polish economy and of our society, which form the source of our country's opportunities. Among the said factors we have to enumerate: an extensive pool of young and increasingly better educated Poles, high entrepreneurship of our society, and also sizable domestic market. The development policy must be based on a consistent building of a knowledge-based society and economy, without which it is impossible to meet the goal of a Poland's development. Simultaneously, such policy has to take into account the fact that Poland is one of the poorest members of the enlarged European Union, and has to counteract the widening disproportions in the economic development of individual regions of Poland in order to avoid the marginalization of the slowest developing regions.

Of fundamental significance for the civilizational progress of Poland is the creation of conditions conducive to development, and particularly of effective institutional and regulatory system. In line with the philosophy of the Lisbon Strategy, the economic success of the European Union depends on its system-wide competitiveness, that is on regulatory actions, structural reforms, and particularly on improving microeconomic framework of the national economy. In the coming years Poland must undertake enormous effort aimed at changing the rules of the game in the economy, to make conducting business operations simpler and less costly, which would be conducive to the improvement of the situation on the labour market (Ministry of Regional Development 2006 b, pp. 86–87).

Modern development policy is indispensable for the rational exploitation of opportunities that stem from Poland's membership in the European Union. Leaders of the EU 25 member states have agreed that in the period 2007–2013 expenditures will amount to 862,362 million Euro. The said agreement stipulates that Poland will receive, in that period, over 91 billion Euro from the EU budget. This amount consists of 67 billion Euro from the structural funds and the Cohe-

² According to the London-based Centre for European Reform (CER), the ranking of the members of the European Union reflecting the economic Growth and Job Strategy was led by Denmark, Sweden and Austria. Among other high-ranking states were: Great Britain, the Netherlands and Finland. The Mediterranean Countries (Italy, Greece and Portugal) received low scores. Poland has fallen from the 22nd place a year ago, to the 26th (penultimate) place, following Bulgaria and Romania (respectively 24th and 25th place). The last place belongs to Malta; however the authors underline that this stems mainly from the lack of data.

sion Fund, as well as almost 27 billion Euro for Polish agriculture. In addition, there will be 3.9 billion Euro for the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy (i.a. scientific research), 581 million Euro earmarked for the goals related to the justice policy and internal affairs. Taking into account the Polish contribution to the EU budget, standing at about 3 billion Euro per year, the net inflow should reach 70 billion Euro. The scale of the UE financial resources available in the period 2007–2013 is incomparably larger than that was offered in the period 2004–2006. This is unique opportunity for the development of our country (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/policy/object/index_pl.htm).

Poland completes the transformation from the post-communist country to a democratic one, based on the market economy. Today, Poland can use its membership in the EU, its presence on the enormous European market to accelerate the development. The foundation of the economic development of the European Union is the Lisbon Strategy, which aims at bringing about: the improvement of the European economy's competitiveness, faster creation of new jobs and the development of advanced technologies. The Polish authorities are faced with the problem how to use the Lisbon Strategy as well as EU assistance in the 2007–2013 period, and opportunities of the Polish economy's expansion on the great European market, to dynamize the economy.

7. WHAT THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2007–2015 IS?

National Development Strategy 2007-2015 (NDS) is a fundamental strategic document which delineates the goals and priorities in the sphere of socio-economic development of Poland, as well as the conditions that should assure such development.

Strategy indicates goals and identifies spheres perceived as the most important from the perspective of attaining the said objectives, on which the state's actions will be focused. Simultaneously it takes into account the leading development trend as well as the goals set by the EU in the Lisbon Strategy. NDS prioritizes the actions to be taken by the government in the period 2007-2013 in order to bring to fruition the vision of Poland. (Ministry of Regional Development 2006a, pp. 6–7).

The National Development Strategy is a principal, long-term strategic document, one that deals with social and economic development of the country, a document that serves as a reference for other strategies and governmental programmes (as well as for the programmes prepared by units of local self-government). NDS constitutes the basic premise for the National Strategic Reference Framework. The time horizon of the Strategy encompasses the period of the EU new financial perspective 2007-2013. NDS constitutes a foundation of an

effective disbursement by Poland, of the development funds, both national and the EU ones. It is an instrument of achieving the social and economic goals, and at the same time serves as a basis for multiplying the volume of funds by a faster and more efficient economic growth and waste avoidance. The NDS's essential role is to coordinate the institutional and regulatory reforms with the activities financed from the EU funds, so that the resultant synergy effect between these two economic policy areas brings the most promising results in terms of development.

The main goal of the strategy is to raise the level and quality of life of Poland's residents: individual citizens and families. Raising the level and quality of life is to be effected by the state's policy that allows for fast, constant economic development in a long-term perspective, based on the development of the human capital, on increasing the innovativeness and competitiveness of the economy and regions (including investments in the sphere of research and development), and on assuring stable economic, social and environmental conditions that will allow to attain the "European" level and quality of life of citizens and families in the country and in local communities. Functioning of the community and its safety should be based on the subsidiarity principle. When threats exceed the capabilities of reacting on the level of local community, the support of competent authorities should be assured.

The Strategy presents the diagnosis of main socio-economic problems that result from developmental backwardation and from underinvestment in the Polish economy as well as of external conditions. It indicates six priorities which point to the most important fields of actions.

The said priorities cover: (Ministry of Regional Development 2006a, pp. 25–59):

1. Growth of competitiveness and innovativeness of the economy:

- a) creating stable macroeconomic foundation of the economic development,
- b) development of entrepreneurship,
- c) increasing access to external financing of investments,
- d) raising the technological level of the economy by growth of outlays on research and development and innovations,
- e) development of information society,
- f) protection of competition,
- g) exports and cooperation with foreign countries,
- h) development of services sector,
- i) restructuring the traditional industrial sectors and privatization,
- j) fishing.

2. Improvement of the condition of the technical and social infrastructure:

a) technical infrastructure – transport infrastructure, housing infrastructure, communications infrastructure, energy infrastructure, environmental protection infrastructure,

b) social infrastructure – education, healthcare, social, cultural, tourism and sports.

3. Growth of employment and raising its quality:

a) creation of favourable conditions for entrepreneurship and reduction of burdens placed on employers,

b) promotion of flexible forms of employment and growth of mobility of work resources,

c) initiatives for the equal opportunities on the job market,

d) aligning the educational offer with the requirements of the job market,

e) developing institutions of a social dialogue and strengthening the negotiation-based system of relations between employees and employers,

f) improvement of the safety and working conditions,

g) growth of the effectiveness of the institutional labour market service,

h) conducting a rational migration policy.

4. Building an integrated social community and its safety:

a) integrated community building an efficient public authority which deserves social trust and preventing corruption b) Supporting of self-organizations of local communities, promotion of the social integration policy, including the pro-family policy, especially in the scope of economic, protective and educational functions,

b) external and internal security – provide for the national security and the sense of safety, internal safety and public order

5. Development of rural areas:

a) development of entrepreneurship and non-agricultural activities,

b) growth of competitiveness of agricultural farms,

c) development and improvement of the technical and social infrastructure in the rural areas,

d) growth of the quality of the human capital and professional activation of the residents of the rural areas.

6. Regional development and raising of the territorial cohesion:

a) raising the competitiveness of the Polish regions,

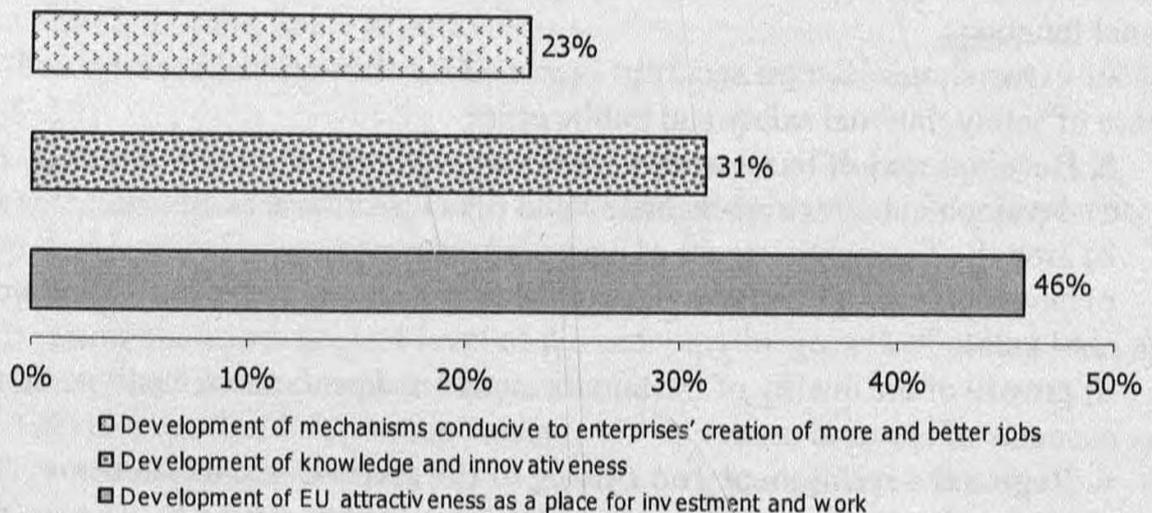
b) levelling the development opportunities of problem areas.

8. IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL FUNDS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LISBON STRATEGY'S OBJECTIVES IN POLAND

The strategic vision, no matter how far reaching, doesn't automatically assure attainment of objectives defined in strategic documents. In our opinion the goals of National Development Strategy are to "generalist" and do not sufficiently focus on the development of R&D sphere and on the information society. We believe that such an approach is not conducive to Poland potential ability to compete effectively on the world markets, as it doesn't focus on the country's entry on the path towards the era of "information civilization". Additionally the country lacks long-term development strategy and the planning horizon of the NDS 2007–2015 is not sufficient to effect structural changes in the economy (which require at least 15–20 years).

The EU cohesion Policy constitutes an important instrument of the Lisbon Strategy's implementation. This fact is confirmed, among others, by the fact that the National Development Plan 2004–2006 objectives were drafted to reflect goals of renewed Lisbon Strategy. The chief priorities of the Lisbon Strategy encompass:

- Development of mechanisms facilitating creation of more and better jobs by enterprises,
- Growth of the European Union attractiveness for investment and work,
- Growth of knowledge and innovativeness.



Graph 1. Value of „Lisbon-related” projects, by the Lisbon Strategy's priorities (in %)
 Source: „Assessment of the Operational Programmes 2004–2006 impact on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, Ecorys, Warsaw 2007.

The coherence of objectives defined in Polish Operational Programmes with those of the Lisbon Strategy was assessed by the evaluation commissioned by

the Ministry of Regional Development³. The said evaluation covered projects started until June 30, 2007. All projects were classified as either coherent with Lisbon objectives⁴ or the "other" projects. According to the evaluation in question, we can conclude that over 50% of resources committed within the framework of the National Development Plan, were earmarked for objectives congruent with the Lisbon Strategy.

The highest expenditures in the group of "Lisbon-related" projects, were allotted to interventions congruent with the priority Growth of EU attractiveness for investment and work (46%). Within the framework of this priority support was extended, among others, to large infrastructural investments in the field of balanced transport.

31% of the value of Lisbon Project was earmarked for the priority growth of knowledge and innovativeness. In this field numerous (though relatively small) projects related to Entrepreneurship gain preeminence.

However, we would like to underline that only 3.6% of the value of Lisbon Projects was focused on the fields related to technological development (Research and development, Innovativeness and Information and Communication Technologies).

Project congruent with the priority Development of mechanisms facilitating creation of more and better jobs by enterprises (23% of expenditures on Lisbon projects) were being implemented mainly in the field of educational and training system (11% of the value of Lisbon projects) and Institutions and Instruments of the Labour Market (9%), while only 3% were allotted for Upgrading workers' skills.

On the basis of the evaluation invoked here, we are forced to conclude that so far, the so-called "Lisbon-related" projects, while important in certain selected areas of the economy, had limited impact on the economy as a whole, which stems from the low volume of the structural funds at the background of other factors behind socio-economic development of the country.

Average impact of the "Lisbon-oriented" programmes on the GDP growth rate in the period 2004–2007 amounted to 3% (which translates into incremental contribution to the GDP growth rate of 0.26 percentage points). It is also estimated that Lisbon projects' contribution to investment expenditures was 10.6%, which attests to their visible impact on the investment processes. In addition "Lisbon-related projects are responsible for 8.5% of growth in employment.

The evaluation discussed here, reveals that the śląskie voivodship stands out, since over 56% of the value of intervention to date was earmarked for projects congruent with the Lisbon objectives. Relatively high share of such projects – in

³ Evaluation *Assessment of the Operational Programmes 2004-2006 impact on the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy* was prepared by Ecorys Polska, December 2007.

⁴ Among the „Lisbon-related" projects were projects, which were conducive to attainment of at least one of the Strategy's objectives or were relevant for at least one field of economic activity deemed essentials for the Strategy's implementation see "Information Paper. Earmarking" prepared by the European Commission).

terms of value – was observed also – łódzkie (54.6%), lubuskie (52.9%), wielkopolskie (52.3%), mazowieckie (51.4) and dolnośląskie (50.8%) voivodships. At the same time podlaskie (33.8%), kujawsko-pomorskie (33.7%) and opolskie (29.3%) were the worst performers in this category.

It should be also stressed that the efficiency of expenditures on “Lisbon-related” project was higher than in the case of all other projects. They “Lisbon” projects have also stronger impact on GDP, employment, and labour productivity. We would also like to remind here that Poland declared in the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007–2013 that it will earmark at least 60% of the available financing on implementing the Lisbon Strategy. Simultaneously, the expenditure thresholds were established for Operational Programmes, with the highest share of Lisbon-oriented projects – in terms of value – envisioned within the framework of Operational Programme Innovative Economy – 95% (for all Operational Programmes the average share of such projects’ value amounts to 40% of the Community’s allocation).

9. IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL FUNDS ON THE R&D SPHERE AND ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY IN POLAND

9.1. Present condition of the R&D sphere and of the information society

In order to measure the real size of the gap between Poland and the rest of the European Union as far as the spheres of: research and development and of information society are concerned, we decided to conduct an independent research of the subject in question. We have started by collecting available statistical data pertaining to selected dimension of research and development and of the information society. Subsequently, we have assessed calculated the gap between Poland and the average values for the European Union (either EU-27, or EU-15 depending on the availability of statistical information) as well as evaluated Poland’s relative position vis-à-vis individual, selected EU countries. We have also researched the Ministry’s of Regional Development data base of projects, to calculate indicators, which show the characteristics and attempted to assess the tangible impact of projects in the field of R&D and information society.

An analysis of statistical data (derived from national sources and Eurostat) confirms that the spheres of R&D as well as that of information society are characterized by enormous distance between Poland and majority of the European Union countries. The said gape appears to be particularly sizeable in the following categories: outlays on R&D activity as a percentage of GDP, the role of the enterprise sector in financing these outlays, the share of high-tech goods in industrial production and in exports, the percentage of enterprises engaged in in-

novative activity, Internet access (particularly wide-band), or the degree of development of e-administration. On the basis of the available statistical data collected while preparing this analysis we conclude that, though the distance which separates Poland from the EU average, has been gradually narrowing, it still remains sizeable.

Below we present the detailed results of our observations, starting with the presentation of the current situation of the Polish R&D and Information society sectors, at the background of the European Union and following with an analysis of structural funds' impact on the two sectors discussed here.

Table 1

Selected development indicators - the R&D and information society in Poland and in the EU in the period 2003–2007

Item	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
R&D outlays as a percentage of GDP					
– EU-27	1.87	1.83	1.84	1.84	.
– Poland	0.54	0.56	0.57	0.56	.
– distance between Poland and the EU-27	1.33	1.27	1.27	1.28	.
Share of the enterprise sector in financing R&D outlays (in %)					
– EU-27	54.2	54.7	54.6	.	.
– Poland	30.3	30.5	33.4	33.1	.
– distance between Poland and the EU-27	23.9	24.2	21.2	.	.
Share of high-tech goods in exports (in %)					
– EU-27	18.56	18.49	18.78	16.67	.
– Poland	2.71	2.73	3.20	3.11	.
– distance between Poland and the EU-27	15.85	15.76	15.58	13.56	.
Percentage of households with Internet access (in %)					
– EU-15	43	45	53	54	59a
– Poland	14	25	30	36	41
– distance between Poland and the EU-15	29	20	23	18	18
Wide-band connections per 100 inhabitants					
– EU-15	4.5	7.6	12.0	16.5	20.8b
– Poland	.	0.5	1.9	3.9	6.8
– distance between Poland and the EU-15	.	7.1	10.1	12.6	14.0
Indicator of development of e-administration c					
– EU-15	47	49	.	56	59d
– Poland	.	10	.	20	25
– distance between Poland and the EU-15	.	39	.	36	34

^a 54% in EU-27; ^b 18,2% w EU-27; ^c percentage of 20 basic public services fully accessible on-line; ^d EU-27.

Source: Eurostat and authors' own calculations.

The outlays on research and development activity in Poland increased (in current prices) from 4 558.3 million zloty in 2003 to 5 892.8 million zloty in 2006 (that is by 29.3%) which translates into per capita growth from 119 zloty to 155 zloty (or by 30.3%) (*Science and Technology in 2006, 2007*). The scale of the said growth was similar to the GDP growth observed in the same period. Consequently, in the period following Poland's accession to the European Union the share of R&D expenditures in the GDP stays at the low level of 0.56-0.57% and is significantly lower than the EU-27 average (1.84% in 2006). According to the Eurostat, of all the countries of the enlarged EU, the lower –than in Poland – share of R&D expenditures in the GDP is observed only in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Malta, Romania and Slovakia. Stagnating share of R&D expenditures in the GDP makes the attainment of the National Development Strategy increasingly unlikely (1.5% of GDP in 2010 and 2% of GDP in 2015) (*National Development Strategy 2007-2015 2006*). It should be also underlined that even the NDS objectives in this area are lower than the respective goal of the Lisbon Strategy (3% of GDP), which has been already achieved by certain EU countries. In 2006 Sweden earmarked 3.73% of GDP and Finland 3.45% for the research and development expenditures.

Financing of the research and development activity in Poland is dominated by budgetary sources, as only one third of expenditures in this area originates with enterprises (while in the EU-27 they contribute, on average, over 50%). The importance of non-budgetary sources of R&D financing is lower only in Cyprus, Greece and Lithuania.

The stagnation in the R&D sphere is further confirmed by declining employment figures per 1000 professionally active persons, which – following slight growth from 4.5 in 2003 to 4.6 in 2004 – declined from 4.4 in 2005 to 4.3 in 2006 (*Science and Technology in 2006, 2007*).

The weaknesses of the R&D sphere lead to declining number of inventions. There has been a decline in patent applications from 2,595 in 1995 to 2,268 in 2003 and subsequently to 2,157 in 2006, which is paralleled by the declining share of high-tech goods in sold production of the manufacturing sector. Though in 2006 the latter indicator (4.9%) was slightly higher than in 2004 and 2005 (4.5%), it did not reach the level observed in 2002 (5.4%) and in 2003 (5.1%) (*Science and Technology in 2006, 2007*).

This trend is also reflected in the share of high-tech goods in Polish exports (3.1% in 2006), which remains much lower than the respective EU average (16.7%).

In the period 2002-2004, in the EU-27 countries 42% of industrial and service enterprises (employing 10 and more people) were engaged in innovative activity. In Poland the respective indicator reached only 25% and was higher only than in: Bulgaria, Malta, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary (*Fourth*

Community Innovation Survey 2007). The post-accession period to date, hasn't yet brought discernible progress, as attested to by low dynamics of outlays on innovative activity in industrial enterprises. From 2003 to 2006 these outlays grew (in current prices) by mere 6.7%, while the share of new and modernized goods in sold production of industrial enterprises had increased – from 20.7% in 2003 to 21.8% in 2005, only to subsequently decline – to 18% in 2006.

In 2007, 41% of households in Poland had access to Internet. Though this share has been growing systematically (in 2003 it stood at mere 14%), it still remains decisively lower than the EU average (54% w EU-27 and 59% in EU-15). Situation looks particularly bleak when it comes to wide-band internet access. In terms of wide-band connections per 100 inhabitants Poland, with the score of 6.8 occupied, in 2007 occupies one of the last places in the EU-27 (only Bulgaria and Romania posted a lower score). The distance in this respect is enormous, not only vis-à-vis leading countries (such as Denmark and the Netherlands with 37.2 and 331. connections per 100 inhabitants respectively), but also EU-15 (20.8) and EU-27 average (18.2). It should be also underlined that the said distance is systematically growing.

9.2. Scale and directions of the structural funds utilization in the field of research and development and the information society

Until the end of 2007, 663 projects were undertaken in both analyzed areas - research and development⁵ and information society⁶. These projects, which were co-financed by the European Union had the total value of 2 372.9 milion zloty. Therefore, projects in the fields which are of fundamental importance for the long-term development prospects and the competitive position of the country on the global scene constituted only 0.8% of the total number (and 2.5% of the value) of all projects undertaken within the framework of National Development Plan. EU co-financing amounted to 1 378.3 million zloty, or 58.1% of the projects' value. As of the end of 2007 only 266 projects were completed (40.1% of the number of projects in these fields), whose value amounted to 674 milion zloty (or 28.4% of the total value of projects in this category).

The structural funds' intervention in the field of research and development was focused on two directions: "research and development infrastructure", and "innovativeness, technology transfer, cooperation between enterprises and scientific institutions". Both directions accumulated 94.4% of the total number of

⁵ Projects classified as category 18 „Research, technological development and innovative activities” were analyzed. Proclamation of the Minister of Finance of July 5 2006 on detailed classification of structural expenditures., Dz.U. Nr 123, poz. 856.

⁶ Projects classified as category 32 of structural expenditures.

projects in the area analyzed here and 95.3% of their value. The number and scale of projects related to “research and development infrastructure” (208 projects, with the combined value of o 773.1 million zloty) were lower than these of projects focused on “innovation and technology transfer” (128 projects, of the combined value of 471.3 million zloty). The degree of “infrastructural” projects’ completion is higher than in the case of projects oriented on innovativeness and technology transfer. The percentage of projects finished by the end of 2007 stood at 59.1% and 12.5% of their number respectively, while in terms of value at 46.1% as against 16.1% (with the EU contribution of 61.5% and 29.1% respectively).

Among the largest R&D projects were:

- The Tivoli software for information infrastructure management (IBM Poland) – project’s value - 55.4 million zloty;
- New didactic building of the Warsaw School of Economics (51.4 million zloty);
- Second stage of building „Auditorium Maximum” of the Jagiellonian University (44.9 million zloty).

The three above-mentioned projects were, as of the end of 2007, still under implementation.

In the field of the information society three directions of intervention stand out: “communication and information technologies” (90 projects), “services and projects for the public – healthcare, administration, education” (89 projects) as well as “basic infrastructure” (86 projects). In terms of projects’ value almost 50% of the EU co-financed projects (45.8%) were pursued in the field of “communication and information technologies”; the share of services and projects for the public” amounted to 28.8%, and of “basic infrastructure” to 17.4%.

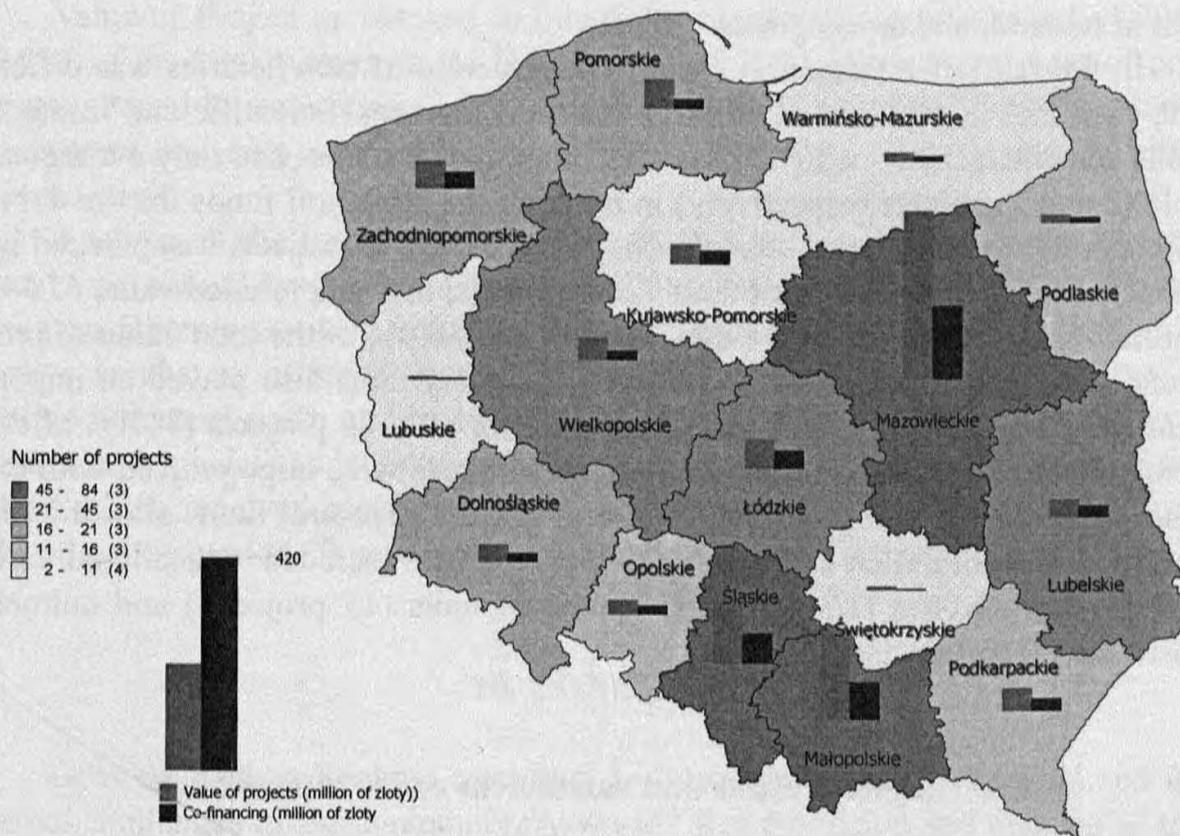
As of the end of 2007 50% of the number of projects related to the “basic infrastructure” were completed; however, they were relatively small (only 18.9% of the value of all projects in this group). In case of projects related to provision of services for the public the respective numbers stood at 40.4% and 37.2%, and in the group of projects pertaining to the “communication and information technologies at 27.8% and 10.8% respectively.

The largest projects in the field of the information society were, as of the end of 2007, not yet completed, and budgetary units were among their largest beneficiaries. The most valuable pertained to:

- Servicing electronic tax declaration of enterprises – “e-Declarations”. Ministry of Finance – project’s value 49 million zloty;
- GEOPORTAL_GOV.PL (Chief Geodesist of the Country) – 41.6 million zloty;
- Establishment of Podkarpacki Science and Technology Park (Rzeszow, Agency of Regional Development) – 40.1 million zloty;

– Reconstruction and integration of the system of national registers (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration) – 31.6 million zloty.

Of the 356 projects in the field of research and development, 84 (or 23.6% of their total number) were undertaken in the mazowieckie voivodship. These projects were larger than average, as their value reached 31.4% of the total value of this category and received 27.2% of the EU co-financing directed into it). śląskie (48 projects), małopolskie (45), lubelskie (32), łódzkie (24) and wielkopolskie (21) followed as voivodships with the largest number of projects in this category. In terms of the number of projects, the position of lubelskie voivodship is worth underlining; however projects realized there were relatively small (9% in terms of numbers and only 3% of value). The lowest number of projects in the field of research and development was observed in: lubuskie and świętokrzyskie (2 each), kujawsko-pomorskie (4) and warmińsko-mazurskie (5) voivodships.



Graph 2. Structure of projects in the field of R&D, by voivodship

S o u r c e: Own calculations on the basis of Ministry's of Regional Development – data base

Lubelskie voivodship was also very active when it comes to attracting projects in the field of information society. The number of such projects undertaken there, was the same as in mazowieckie (53 each), out of the total of 307 pro-

jects. However, in mazowieckie voivodship, the average project's value amounted to 6.7 million zloty, while in lubelskie to 0.9 million zloty only. Consequently, the share of projects implemented in mazowieckie stood at 33.4% of the total value of projects in the sphere of information society (compared to 4.5% in case of lubelskie voivodship). Relatively numerous projects were implemented in: pomorskie (36), łódzkie and podkarpackim (each 30), while opolskie (1), wielkopolskie (3) and kujawsko-pomorskim (4) were the least represented voivodships in this category.

In the period 2003–2007 science and research units were the main beneficiaries of the structural funds in the field of research and development. They were engaged in 154 projects (with the total value of 496.8 million zloty). Enterprises pursued 94 projects (380.1 million zloty), educational units – 64 projects (364.1 million zloty), while healthcare units – 31 projects (32.8 million zloty). On the other hand, territorial self-government units (8 projects), NGOs (3 projects), budgetary units and churches (1 project in category) projected low interest in research and development projects.

In the field of information society the structure of beneficiaries was different, than that in the field of research and development. Scientific and research units and enterprises – which dominated in the R&D sphere- had only a marginal role (2 and 3 projects respectively) in utilizing the structural funds for the development of the information society. The highest share of projects was pursued by the territorial self-government units (209 projects, of the combined value of 543 million zloty) or. 68.1% of the total number and 50.9% of the total value of projects in the field of information society. Budgetary units also played an important role, even though they were responsible for only 35 projects (11.4% of the total number of projects in this field), however these were large project, with the total value of 305.1 million zloty (or 28.6% of the structural funds allocation in the field of information society). Other beneficiaries included: educational units (22 projects), NGOs (16 projects), healthcare units (15 projects) and cultural institutions (5 projects).

9.3. Tangible results and assessment of the intervention

Taking into account the challenges resulting from the need of developing knowledge-based economy, which in our opinion will determine the competitive position of a country for many decades to come, we are disappointed to conclude that inflow of structural funds hasn't resulted in significant increase in the share of expenditures on R&D in the country's GDP.

Table 2

Value of projects in the R&D sphere as a percentage of the total outlays on R&D in the enterprises sector

	Total		Enterprises	
	in milion of zloty	% of R&D outlays	in milion zloty	% of R&D outlays
R&D outlays in the years 2004-2006	16 622.8	x	5 106.0	x
Value of projects	1 306.9	7.9	380.1	7.4
in it: EU co-financing	653.8	3.9	97.7	1.9
Value of completed projects	448.8	2.7	56.5	1.1
in it: EU co-financing	262.4	1.6	11.5	0.2

Source: Own calculations based on the Ministry's of Regional Development data-base, Central Statistical Office „ Research and development Activity in 2006”, Science and Technology in 2006”. Warsaw 2007.

Value of Project undertaken in this field represented, as of the end of 2007 7.9% of the total outlays on R&D in the period 2004–2006, and in case of projects pursued by enterprises 7.4%. Therefore, the EU structural funds constitute important, but only supplementary source of financing research and development activity.

Analysis of the tangible effects, reveals that within the framework of Sectoral Operational Programme Growth of Competitiveness of Enterprises 78 specialized laboratories were either built or modernized (of which 51 in 2007), 19 active incubators of technology were established. Support was extended to 27 active industrial parks and to 17 science and technology parks. Services of research and specialized laboratories were rendered to 1.120 enterprises and all the units which received assistance within the framework described herein, introduced on the market 17 new products or technologies (9 in 2007).

10. CONCLUSION

Does the Lisbon Strategy constitute an adequate answer to external and internal challenges of the contemporary world? Are the vision and mission of the Lisbon Strategy precisely depicted? Is the goal properly defined? Are the resources earmarked for the strategy's implementation sufficient? Does the implementation method appear effective? All these questions meet with an array of critical opinions and comments

New version of the Lisbon Strategy doesn't mention the transformation of the united Europe into the most competitive economy in the world by the year 2010. New goals set by the European Commission, for the member states, are of

a less ambitious nature: i.a. reaching the 3% rate of economic growth, creation of 6 million of new jobs in the next 5 years, opening of the EU services market and increasing expenditures on research and development. The Lisbon Strategy shouldn't be regarded as a universal ready-for-use recipe, one that can be applied universally in all the countries, since individual countries possess different conditions, particularly different level of development and traditions. In order to reach the strategy's objective, the actions that fall outside the EU competencies have to be taken, ones that belong to the national governments, such as for example: social policy, foreign policy, tax regimes or expenditures from national budgets on science and research and development. The Lisbon Strategy constitutes a framework for the creation of national strategies, adjusted to local circumstances. The direction of changes should be the same for all the members of the European Union, however the implementation measures and methods have to be tailored to the specificity of a given country. Poland responds to these challenges with the National Development Strategy 2007-2015. In our opinion, however, the results of the Polish response can be described as mixed, at best. On one hand the fact that over 50% of the value of the EU co-financed projects is congruent with the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, leaves roughly half 50% of such projects as not relevant to the Lisbon objectives. Obviously, the level of backwardation in such fields as for example transport infrastructure, justifies such a structure of all projects, however the situation appears even more disturbing when we look at the selected indicators of future competitive position – namely at the sphere of research and development and the information society. Not only the present condition in these field is characterized by enormous gap between Poland and the UE, but also the to-date structure of the structural funds intervention doesn't constitute a harbinger of required, positive transformation, as attested to by the results of authors research based on the Ministry's of Regional Development data-base of projects.

It's worth to underline, however, that currently amended Lisbon Strategy constitutes the only comprehensive program in the European Union aimed at improving the EU competitiveness, a program which consists of a set of economic and social reforms. The strategy is perceived as an obligation to refresh the European Union in the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

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**KONKURENCYJNOŚĆ REGIONÓW UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ JAKO WYZWANIE
STRATEGII LIZBOŃSKIEJ I POLITYKI REGIONALNEJ
NA LATA 2007-2013. ANALIZA WPLYWU FUNDUSZY STRUKTURALNYCH
W WYBRANYCH OBSZARACH (SFERA B+R I SPOŁECZEŃSTWO INFORMACYJNE)**

Celem tego opracowania jest przybliżenie problematyki konkurencyjności regionów w kontekście realizacji Strategii Lizbońskiej, w którym to zaprezentowane zostaną teoretyczne aspekty zjawiska konkurencyjności regionów, cele polityki regionalnej Unii Europejskiej, a także sama Strategia Lizbońska i planowane działania w ramach budżetu UE na lata 2007–2013. Zobrazowano najważniejsze cele polityki spójności na lata 2007–2013, którymi są: większy wzrost gospodarczy i zatrudnienie we wszystkich regionach Unii Europejskiej. Opracowanie prezentuje ponadto podstawowe założenia Strategii Rozwoju Kraju 2007–2015, dokumentu będącego polską odpowiedzią na potrzebę zintensyfikowania działań zawartych w SL, jak również wyniki, przeprowadzonego przez autorów, badania dotyczącego wpływu funduszy strukturalnych na realizację Strategii Lizbońskiej oraz na rozwój sfery B+R i społeczeństwa informacyjnego w Polsce. Wyniki te ukazują, szczególnie w przypadku projektów „unijnych” w zakresie B+R oraz społeczeństwa informacyjnego niepokojąco – z punktu widzenia możliwości budowania GOW w Polsce – niewielki udział tych inwestycji w całości wartości projektów współfinansowanych ze źródeł unijnych.

Słowa kluczowe: Strategia Lizbońska, konkurencyjność regionów, polityka regionalna UE, cele polityki spójności na lata 2007–2013, Strategia Rozwoju Kraju 2007–2015.