

INTRODUCTION

This publication was created to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Department of Entrepreneurship and Industrial Policy at the University of Łódź and the related conference event.

The Department of Entrepreneurship and Industrial Policy is one of the oldest departments in Poland dealing with a wide range of issues associated with individual and organisational entrepreneurship, creating and developing new business ventures, as well as management of innovation, technology transfer, economics and the functioning of small and medium-sized enterprises, internationalisation of business activity and of an industrial and innovation policy, including regional innovation systems, as well as technological, innovation and regional foresight. Research and teaching activities in this field have been carried out since the mid 1980s, initially in the framework of the Department of Industrial Economics, and since 1991 in the independent Department of Enterprise and Industrial Policy at the Faculty of Economics and Sociology of the University of Łódź under the guidance of Prof. Bogdan Piasecki, the precursor of studies on entrepreneurship and the functioning of SMEs in Poland. In 1998, the Department of Enterprise and Industrial Policy was transformed into the Department of Entrepreneurship and Industrial Policy at the Faculty of Management of the University of Łódź. Its mission is to educate and conduct academic research in the area of management sciences, in the field of entrepreneurship, as well as innovation and SME management, according to the best European and world models, with the participation of foreign and domestic partners. Individual and team research, international scientific and educational cooperation, participation in the organisation of the Summer School of Innovation for many years and regular contacts with business practice in this area are the hallmark of the Department and the prerequisite to maintain a high position on the academic map of Poland, as well as to develop its own academic staff.

The scientific, expert, organisational and educational achievements of the Department have a significant impact on the development of management sciences. These achievements are recognised not only by the Polish academic community, but also by foreign centres that the Department has been cooperating with in many forms, e.g. the participation in international research grants, the joint organisation of international conferences and seminars, guest lectures or joint publications.

With close ties to business practice through numerous expert evaluations and consultation for the business community and the local government, the cooperation with local universities, as well as the provision of workshops and education for students, the Department actively participates in the development of Łódź and the Łódź Region, which constitute the natural environment for the academic and expert activities of the Department.

This publication is only a part of the scientific achievements of the academics at the Department of Entrepreneurship and Industrial Policy that can be presented in the framework of one book. It provides an overview of the directions of the current research conducted by the Department.

The paper prepared by Paweł Głodek provides a description of determinants for creating spin-off companies in terms of using the entrepreneurial potential of company employees which may be an opportunity as well as a considerable threat to the company capacity and the ability to preserve its competitive advantage.

Monika Fabińska in her paper presents the concept and methods of benchmarking results as an instrument to improve the efficiency of business environment institutions based on the analysis of complex projects for the selected measures and submeasures of the Operational Programme Innovative Economy.

The paper written by Janusz Kornecki provides a qualitative analysis of the system of support for innovative entrepreneurship based on the National Innovation Network which offers proinnovative services for small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland, as well as recommendations of changes in this system in terms of the “philosophy” of support, its scope and instruments.

Renata Lisowska in her paper attempts to identify and classify the factors in the development of small and medium-sized enterprises. It focuses on the assessment of internal determinants of the SME development that result from environmental conditions, as well as internal determinants associated with the person of the entrepreneur and the enterprise.

The paper presented by Jan Mertl draws attention to the issue of competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises in the Polish economy, with particular emphasis on innovation as one of the main sources that influence the competitive advantage of enterprises.

The paper of Anna Rogut concentrates on the issue of smart specialisation which has currently become one of the main topics in modern concepts of regional development management. It presents the terms of adopting the concept of smart specialisation for the formulation of regional innovation strategies and defines the procedure for determining the areas of smart specialisation.

Anna Rogut and Bogdana Piasecki present in their paper modern instruments for the management of technological development such as: foresight, technology life cycle and technology roadmapping, which constitute a perfect complement to the traditional instrumentation of technology management based mainly on the achievements of the theory of rational expectations.

The paper prepared by Jarosław Ropega presents the characteristics and importance of restarts, as a consequence of business failures. It also points out the need to support efforts to develop education for entrepreneurs and to improve tools for early warning for micro and small enterprises.

The paper written by Edward Stawasz provides an overview of scientific literature on the concepts and areas, as well as specificity, of the innovation capacity of enterprises. The innovation capacity is presented as a complex, multi-factor and multi-area concept that encompasses numerous internal and external factors influencing an organisation, in which dynamic capabilities play a particularly significant role as they enable undertaking innovations of the particular character and scale, as well as their effective implementation.

Krzysztof B. Matusiak from the Department of Economics at the University of Łódź devoted his paper to the presentation of development trends in academic entrepreneurship, as a consequence of the transformation of universities and their adjustment to challenges of modern economic growth in Poland and worldwide.

Wishing to thank all the Authors of the papers in this publication, I would like to emphasise that the papers reflect current issues related to entrepreneurship and innovation, and may serve as an inspiration for further scientific inquiry.

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Edward Stawasz