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## **REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FACTORS in EU and in POLAND**

### **- SIMILARITIES and DIFFERENCES**

#### **ABSTRACT:**

The contemporary process of socio-economic development shows a tendency to increase discrepancies. At the same time, the limited effectiveness of current regional policy measures and the existence of barriers to achieving socially acceptable differences in the level and standard of living are emphasized. External determinants of the development process, specific in various parts of the world, including in Western and Central-Eastern Europe, are related to long-term changes in economic systems (Naisbitt, 1982, Naisbitt, Naisbitt, 2016, Horváth, 2015, Salamin, 2016). The current state of these changes results from the transformation that creates post-modern conditions for economic activity, characteristic of the current stage of development of cognitive capitalism (Harvey, 1990, Boutang, 2012). They are strengthened by globalization which is becoming more and more visible in ongoing economic integration (Huwart, Verdier, 2013). In these difficult conditions, shaped by identified megatrends, the real challenge is a successful impact on regional development factors, which effectively aim to optimize the conditions of the leading economic processes, and thus to improve the standard of living (Future of cohesion policy ..., 2015, White Paper ..., 2017, Seventh Report ..., 2017, Schneider, 2017). This is because these factors change the scope, interpretation and mechanism of interaction and significantly differ in space, which leads to their redefinition.

The aim of the analysis is to compare changes in regional development factors in two regional systems: the European Union and Poland, which is an example of a new Member State characterized by the prevalence of less developed regions. Research work consists of three stages. The first stage presents the results of findings organizing the direction and scope of the impact of modern megatrends in socio-economic development on changes in regional development factors. The second stage involves the analysis of differences in development and their factors in two sets: regions of EU Member States and regions of Poland. The third stage of the analysis concerns the identification of differences in regional development factors in these two sets, and their consequences for regional development. This analysis is aimed at identifying factors that significantly affect changes and the current state of regional socio-economic differences in Europe and their specific features in the structure of regions: more developed - transitional - less developed. This study is being carried out as part of the FORSED research project (<http://www.forsed.amu.edu.pl>) financed by the National Science Center as part of OPUS competition 10 - 2015/19 / B / HS5 / 00012: *New challenges of regional policy in shaping the socio-economic development factors of less developed regions.*

**KEY WORDS:** development factor, megatrends in socio-economic changes, cohesion, spatial development differences, less-developed regions, European Union, Poland.