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## THE REGIONAL DIMENSION OF ECONOMIC SECURITY IN THE AGE OF GLOBALISATION USING THE EXAMPLE OF THE LOWER SILESIAN VOIVODSHIP\*

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**Summary:** Globalization is a spatial phenomenon because it produces changes not only in the overall global economy, but also in the area of the region which becomes an immanent element of economic processes. States and regions seek to neutralize threats from external or internal conditions, i.e. they seek national security, including economic security. The economic security itself is one of the conditions for the development of the country and its regions. It depends, to a large extent, on identifying the determinants affecting the effectiveness of its shaping. The purpose of this article is to outline the concept of economic security and selected variables based on the example of the Lower Silesian Voivodship.

**Keywords:** national security, economic security, region, determinants, Lower Silesian Voivodship.

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### 1. Introduction

Globalization is a spatial phenomenon because it produces changes not only in the overall global economy but also in the area of the region, which becomes an immanent element of economic processes [Kelly 2001]. There has been an increasing emergence of transnational corporations, i.e. enterprises carrying on economic activities of an international range, which have branches abroad, mainly in big cities. Therefore one of the most important manifestations of globalization is the internationalization of companies' activities [Świtalski 2005, p. 153]. Changes in national economies are the result of interactions between the following processes occurring at the same time: the technological revolution based on information technology, the formation of a global economy and changes in the development paradigm connected with the transition from an industrial economy to a knowledge-based economy.

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The modern economy shows the decreasing role of the state in the economy, while increasing the importance of new entities, i.e. regions and cities [Rykiel 2000, p. 35]. They have greater flexibility in terms of adjusting to the turbulent environment. One can talk more frequently about the phenomenon of regionalization, that is, about the process of empowerment of local and regional communities which causes changes in the way the space of cities and regions is managed. As a consequence of this, a 'gmina' (municipality), a 'powiat' (district/county) or a region become the subjects of economic processes and they begin competing among themselves. As a result of the increase in the spatial scope of exchange of new units the competitiveness is increasing and becoming more fierce.

It should be noted that political communities (states, regions), while setting their policy priorities, should represent and fulfill the interests of the community which they represent. National security is the specific ability of a country to neutralize threats from the external environment, or the internal conditions which positively affect the competitiveness of the country. In this context it can be said that states are rarely safe because there are still various types of threats, e.g. of an economic, social, political or military character. National security includes ensuring external, military, internal, civil, social, environmental and economic security. Therefore the economic security itself can both directly and indirectly affect national security.

It is economic security that is one of the conditions for the development of a state and its regions, and what comes with that, the increasing competitiveness on the international market. This depends, to a large extent, on the diagnosis of the determinants affecting the effectiveness and efficiency of its shaping. The purpose of this article is to outline the concept of economic security and the selected variables shaping it using the example of the Lower Silesian Voivodship.

## **2. Economic security of the state and region**

Economic security has become one of the aims of the internal and foreign policy of states. It can be said that it includes the minimum provision of the quiet, smooth operation of the national economy or at least improving the existing situation. Economic security refers to both state and private entities, although it is understood in different ways. For example, citizens think that economic security is maintained at a time when interest rates and exchange rates are stable and when there is a low unemployment rate. However for a state it is possible to freely attain the goals of macroeconomic, social and foreign policies, as well as mitigate the risks coming from the global economy (e.g. from transnational corporations, investment funds, banks, and other states) and adapt the globalization benefits for the development of their own country. It can be said that economic security is the product of the factors of economic development and barriers to the state of the economy and its structures, as well as the status of economic relations able to effectively oppose negative external effects, i.e. those weakening economic development, socio-political stability and defensive ability [Stachowiak 1994, pp. 187-188].

Spatial development is characterized by high complexity, which results from an increase in the socio-economic openness of countries and regions, as well as the diversity of functional and spatial systems [Korenik 2003, p. 7]. When planning the evolution of economic development several things should be taken into account, i.e. the resources present in the area and the natural beauty of the environment, human, economic and innovative potential, the degree of the development of the social and technical infrastructure as well as the needs of the inhabitants of the country. As a result it becomes necessary to take actions that are intended to implement the movement and interaction of individual actors of political, economic and social life for the proper use of these resources [Brandenburg 2002, p. 14]. It should be noted that the opportunities of growth largely depend on the activity of societies, which is manifested on an economic, social, political, and cultural plane [Pająk 2005, p. 62]. Great importance is also attributed to non-material values, such as their knowledge, qualifications and new skills gained, as well as enterprise and leadership skills [Brandenburg 2002, p. 14].

Therefore the managing of the country (region) in conditions of unstable environment, characterized by violent, discontinuous, often unpredictable, multidirectional social, economic and political changes, must be strategic. It is very important that the economic security of the country and regions to some extent reflects the degree of vulnerability of the country to transfer economic political action on the economic plane through the use of economic instruments or mechanisms.

When making current decisions the changes that will occur in the future should also be taken into account. The aim should therefore be to build up the capacity of the economy to gain long-lasting benefits from relations with foreign countries, coping with international competition, and ensuring the high rate of return from factors of production and a high level of employment while maintaining the economic security of the state and reducing the economic threats coming from the world economy and its entities.

In order to ensure economic security, a socio-economic vision of a country [region] is determined and is based on long-term development strategies. This allows to direct changes in the economy and determine the degree of realisation of the targets, and also to see if there are any signs of economic threat. Such signals are sent out, for example, by basic macroeconomic indicators recorded by statistical offices, e.g. the rate of inflation, unemployment rate, the level of interest rates, the range of income of the population, the balance of the current account balance, the amount of international debt compared to GDP ratio and the amount of exports, etc. Therefore one can say that, similarly to a country, a region may for the purpose of ensuring economic security exploit the development and functioning of the economy.

Therefore the market is, on the one hand, the source of security threats, for example due to technological espionage, speculative activities, money laundering, or the impact of other states which make use of their potential and ongoing market processes to affect the economic security of other entities. On the other hand, economic

security is positively influenced by the cooperation conducted by countries and regions which aim at achieving change together. It is worth remembering, however, that the creation of a commercial and financial system is by far more affected by countries which are growing fast and which make an attractive market.

The cooperation of the state allows to implement beneficial regulations which do not discriminate against one of the parties and which could reduce the benefits achieved from the efficient placement of resources and expertise. A reason for cooperation between countries and regions is also to neutralize the security threats arising from the existence of the market, regardless of its size or strength.

### 3. Economic security of the Lower Silesian Voivodship – examples of determinants

There are no explicit tools that allow to identify and determine the condition or the level of economic security in the country and the region [Stachowiak, Kurek and Kurek 2004]. In order to do this one can use the determinants which are the result of development factors. The most important are the macro-economic determinants which affect economic security. The factors which are crucial are those of an international and national character, including monetary, budgetary and labour market factors. A beneficial situation in this respect creates elements for the functioning of the society and the administrating entities, and therefore the basis for the socio-economic development of the country and the region. Some examples of factors characterizing the various spheres of economic security in the Lower Silesian Voivodship are presented in the table below.

**Table 1.** Spheres of economic security in the Lower Silesian Voivodship

Specification	Stabilizing factors	Destabilizing factors
1	2	3
Economic sphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– convenient areas for business investment and job creation, as well as a relatively high level of economic development and relatively high dynamics of development</li> <li>– upgraded research and academic potential concentrated mostly in Wrocław</li> <li>– strong industrial centres and relatively large concentration of foreign direct investment, as well as placement of affiliates and branches of transnational corporations in the region</li> <li>– expanded interregional and international cooperation and recognition of the region due to the participation in international and world events and happenings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– low investment activity of sector of small and medium-sized enterprises</li> <li>– high level of fixed assets depreciation</li> <li>– high level of imitative innovation, low level of expenditure on research and development, as well as low degree of commercialization of research results</li> <li>– low level of recultivation of post-exploitation and post-industrial sites</li> <li>– dominance of non-product farms and low level of support services for agriculture and low activity of groups and producer organisations and market organizations</li> <li>– deteriorating and not adapted to changing European trends tourist infrastructure and low tourist attraction</li> </ul>

Table 1. (cont.)

1	2	3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– high tourist attractiveness of the area of the voivodship and a large potential for tourism development restructuring of agriculture in order to strengthen the non-operational functions</li> <li>– possibility of using the River Oder for water tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– growing networking of the EU economies at a low level of involvement from Polish entities non-utilization of the River Odra for economic, transport, tourism, energy purposes as well as the marginalization of its transport importance</li> </ul>
Sphere of economic infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– using new energy technologies based on renewable sources of energy</li> <li>– large reserves of natural resources and increased demand for the use of regional deposits of useful minerals</li> <li>– development within the national and international transport links</li> <li>– the importance of transit in the region (European transport corridor) and the ability to integrate internal systems of technical infrastructure into available supra-regional transit systems</li> <li>– a dense network of communication infrastructure</li> <li>– better coordination of activities in the field of modernization and expansion of transmission networks and the development of multimodal logistics centres, development of International Airport Wrocław S.A.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– a small share of production of energy from renewable sources and depreciated energy infrastructure and a growing energy deficit in the metropolitan area of Wrocław</li> <li>– poor transport links with the capital of the country as well as in a northerly direction and expanding the travel time to the region, including from/to the voivodship and sub-regional centres</li> <li>– development of alternative transport routes in neighbouring countries</li> <li>– lack of implementation of the concept of integrated transport in large subregional centres and progressive obstruction of transport system</li> <li>– insufficient network bandwidth of transport infrastructure, non- adapted to the growing needs and a significant degradation of existing network</li> <li>– unused potential of existing railway lines and further depreciation of transmission network</li> <li>– insufficient considering the transport needs of the region in the national transport policy</li> <li>– competition from growing regional airports in the country and abroad</li> </ul>
Social sphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– relatively high percentage of the population of working age (65.6%)</li> <li>– development of higher education in other cities of the region (Jelenia Góra, Legnica, Wałbrzych)</li> <li>– high potential of artistic circles and good infrastructure related to culture</li> <li>– increasing civic engagement influencing the development of the third sector and civil society</li> <li>– a high level of tolerance for diversity, especially among young people</li> <li>– concentration of specialized health care establishments (clinics and specialized hospitals)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ageing population, low birth rate, negative migration balance, growing indicators of demographic burden</li> <li>– permanent migration and the outflow of qualified personnel from the region</li> <li>– relatively low share of graduates in science and a mismatch of the curriculum to the needs of the labour market</li> <li>– a large number of unemployed persons , mismatch of workers qualifications for the labour market and low level of economic activity</li> <li>– lack of integrated approach to solving social problems and insufficient social welfare infrastructure</li> <li>– disadvantageous structure of hospital base and indebtedness of establishments</li> </ul>

1	2	3
Spatial sphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– favourable location at the junction of three countries, proximity of large urban centres (but Berlin is also a threat)</li> <li>– polycentric structure of settlement network, large urban centres as well as a significant number of smaller towns</li> <li>– well-ordered system of spatial planning at regional and local level</li> <li>– creation of common cross-border tourist complexes, financed by European funds, among others.</li> <li>– rich hydrographic network and terrain conducive to retention of water and improving the safety of flood prevention</li> <li>– development of new technologies of natural disasters warning and effective integration of crisis management system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– significant imbalance in the level of economic development in the voivodship and increasing polarization within the region</li> <li>– phenomenon of uncontrolled and intensive suburbanization, especially in the metropolitan area of Wrocław and other major cities in the region</li> <li>– lack of spatial order in planning of towns, areas and communication routes and low level of environment aesthetics in housing areas</li> <li>– globalization as a factor of reducing the regional integration and a sense of identity</li> <li>– deficits in flood protection infrastructure and its bad technical condition</li> <li>– insufficient outlays on the system of protection against floods and droughts and their effects</li> <li>– low civil responsibility</li> </ul>

Source: own elaboration based on the *Wrocław Regional Development Agency, Strategy for the development of the Lower Silesia Voivodship 2020. Expert project*, Wrocław 2012, pp. 14-15.

An exemplary absolute indicator relating to the measurable characteristics of economic security are the sizes of the gross domestic product (GDP). The situation in the Lower Silesian Voivodship is satisfactory because the value of GDP per capita was 41.750 zł in 2010 which exceeded the average for the country, and which in 2008-2010 amounted to 35 267 (GDP by voivodships). In 2010 GDP was 5% higher in real terms compared to the previous year, and the annual growth rate of gross domestic product stood at 4.6% (in constant prices). The region reached the highest level of GDP right after the Masovian Voivodship, alongside the Silesian Voivodship and the Greater Poland Voivodship. However, the situation was worse than in the eastern areas of Germany, but comparable with the figures characterizing the situation of northern regions of the Czech Republic (Severovýchod, Stredni Morava) [*Wrocław Regional Development Agency* 2012, pp. 9-17].

Despite the negative economic situation in the surrounding areas of Poland, the voivodship managed to achieve benefits in the field of foreign cooperation. The Lower Silesian Voivodship had the highest export share of GDP of the region in the country, which reflects the level of competitiveness of the region. Achieving good results was accompanied by the high activity of Polish entrepreneurs and an increase in consumer spending. The most important export products included machinery and energy equipment, metallurgical products from non-ferrous metal, automobiles, furniture and joinery products, extracted and processed products from non-ferrous metals and their alloys, clothing and underwear from textiles, electrical machinery and equipment, rail transport and electronic products [*Foreign trade...*]. Most products were exported to Germany, Britain, the Czech Republic and Belgium.

Such a situation fostered the development of enterprises, but at the same time created a big export asymmetry in favour of the European Union which may be dangerous during a serious turbulence on the markets in the euro area. Furthermore, it should be noted that in the Lower Silesian Voivodship exporters are mainly foreign companies that have invested in the region, which on the one hand, confirms the high investment attractiveness of the region and on the other hand, could increase the risk of a deterioration in the balance of foreign trade in the event of investors' withdrawal from this area. Therefore it is necessary to support Polish private enterprises in the region, especially as small and medium-sized enterprises of the Lower Silesia Voivodship are one of the most active exporters, according to the report of the Polish Agency for Enterprise Development (7.7% of exports of small and medium-sized enterprises in Poland, which places the voivodship in fifth place in the country) [Zaleski, Korf and Lisowiec 2011, p. 45].

A negative impact on the economic security of the Lower Silesia Voivodship can be the big differences in terms of the level of economic development of the region. The most attractive places to invest are around the strong pillars of growth (Wrocław, Legnica-Głogów Copper District). However, the peripheral areas are characterized by low market capacity, inadequate communication infrastructure and inadequate economic structure.

While analyzing the level of economic security of the region one should keep in mind that, among other things, some of the categories of the budget revenue of the voivodship depend on the number, size and the financial and economic condition of enterprises. Among the factors affecting the level of economic security one can specify the level of debt, budget deficit and budget expenditure profile.

When analyzing the annual report on the implementation of the budget of the Lower Silesia Voivodship for 2012, it should be noted that the region managed to obtain the highest revenue and spend on investment in Poland for the objectives co-financed by foreign funds (Resolution No. 3791/IV/13). The budget revenue of the voivodship (1.674 million zł in 2012) increased by 36% in comparison to 2011, and it has been the highest growth in the past five years. In addition, the voivodship took first place in terms of capital expenditure in Poland. In 2012, 802 million zł was spent on investment. Next, the expenditure on the tasks co-sponsored by foreign capital amounted to 655 million zł. 99% of all intended expenditure was carried out. Current income was higher than current expenditure and capital expenditure surpassed capital revenue, thus a deficit of investment nature appeared in the budget. The deficit was covered by a credit. However, the total debt of the voivodship did not exceed the statutory debt limits and accounted for 42% of the budget revenue. It should be noted that on 1 January 2014, some amendments come into force to the act on public finance (Journal of Laws 2009, no. 157, item 1240) which introduced new individual debt indicators. According to article 243 of the act on public finance, the ability to incur debt will depend on the individual situation of the voivodship, and more specifically on the surplus of income over current expenditure.

According to the results of the Bureau of Research, until the end of 2013 the Lower Silesian Voivodship may exceed the individual debt ratio which is an unfavorable situation, taking into account the economic security of the region [Korolewska and Marchewka-Bartkowiak 2011].

The spending capacity of local self-government are also affected by the economic potential of the region. Unfortunately in 2012 the economic and financial indicators of non-financial companies of the region deteriorated, including the indicators of profitability from the sale of products, goods and materials (by 2.7 percentage points), return on turnover (about 5.2 percentage points) and net profit (by 4.6 percentage points) [Statistical Office in Wrocław 2013, p. 19]. The economic security of the region was negatively affected by the value of liquidity ratio of the first degree which in 2012 was 27.4%, while the financial index of the second kind 93,1%. Therefore in 2012 the enterprises in the Lower Silesian Voivodship were not able to quickly repay the incurred liabilities.

By contrast, cash factors affecting the level of economic security may include the level of inflation and the evolution of the exchange rate. In 2012, the increase of inflation amounted to 3.7% (4.6% in 2011) in the Lower Silesian Voivodship and was close to the national level. The rate of increase in the average annual prices of consumer goods and services depended mainly on the prices of goods and services related to transport and prices associated with housing and education. The price competitiveness of the voivodship was also influenced by labour costs and the performance of the workforce. It is estimated that these indicators will increase in subsequent years [*Wrocław Regional Development Agency* 2012, pp. 9-17]. This could negatively affect the investment attractiveness of the region by reducing its price competitiveness, as well as affecting the change in the location of foreign direct investment. Therefore it is very important to increase the non-price competitiveness of the region.

The most important factors of economic security in the labour market can be considered to be the level of unemployment and professional activity which affect the economic security of the region. Unfortunately only five 'powiats' of the Lower Silesian Voivodship, centered around the city of Wrocław, reported in recent years a positive birth rate and balance of permanent migration. The remaining 'powiats' recorded adverse demographic changes. Since 2008 the rate of increase in the average employment in the region has decreased slightly, and in 2012 the recorded unemployment rate increased to the level of 13.5%. Unfortunately, the increase in unemployment was one of the highest in the country (next to the Łódź Voivodship).

Changes in the modern world affect the continuous change of the determinants in the sphere of economic security in the Lower Silesian Voivodship.

## 4. Conclusion

Economic security is one of the areas of Polish security. Therefore it is necessary to recognize its determinants and to concentrate the resources and tools at the appropriately selected determinants. The basis for economic security in the region is also the high level of macroeconomic security, which is connected with the stability of the economy in Poland.

Important threats for Polish economic security may include the effects of the global and international financial crises and the economic decline in the rate of growth of GDP, adverse changes in exchange rates, the instability of the price levels and the build-up of public debt. It is important to keep track of current changes and their impact on the Polish market. In connection with the progressive process of globalisation the possibility of the negative economic impact of countries has increased. Currently, countries affect each other through the exchange rate, interest rate, the level of technological advancement, levels of taxation, and less commonly, through tariff and quasi-tariff barriers.

The Lower Silesian Voivodship is one of the most attractive investment regions which is trying to exploit its inner potential in the best way. This is the fifth voivodship in the country in terms of the number of population, with higher than average economic indicators for Poland. However, it is also a very spatially diverse voivodship, in which the polarization and stratification of society has become a big problem.

Unfortunately the global economic crisis may hinder the possibilities of financing the development policy of the Lower Silesia Voivodship. That is why, the territorially oriented discussions, were started on the further direction of the changes in the voivodship. These attempts are aimed at upgrading the region's vision of the future based on a long-term development strategy. Changes in the way of running the development policy in the voivodship should allow to increase the economic security of the region and increase its efficiency. The observed threats for economic security should be dealt with appropriately to the needs of problem areas, and therefore territorially differentiated actions and instruments should be applied.

In order to ensure economic security, the changes in the economy should be oriented and the degree of realisation of the targets should be determined, and also any signs of economic threats should be verified. A properly defined regional policy will have positive effects on the competitiveness of the region and its economic security.

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## REGIONALNY WYMIAR BEZPIECZEŃSTWA EKONOMICZNEGO W DOBIE GLOBALIZACJI NA PRZYKŁADZIE WOJEWÓDZTWA DOLNOŚLĄSKIEGO

**Streszczenie:** Globalizacja ma charakter przestrzenny, gdyż wywołuje zmiany nie tylko w ogólnej gospodarce światowej, ale także w przestrzeni, jaką jest region, który staje się immanentnym elementem procesów gospodarczych. Państwa i regiony dążą do neutralizowania zagrożeń płynących z otoczenia zewnętrznego lub uwarunkowań wewnętrznych, czyli bezpieczeństwa narodowego, w tym m.in. ekonomicznego. Właśnie bezpieczeństwo ekonomiczne jest jednym z warunków rozwoju państwa i jego regionów. Zależy ono w znacznym stopniu od rozpoznania determinant wpływających na efektywność i skuteczność jego kształtowania. Celem artykułu jest przybliżenie pojęcia bezpieczeństwa ekonomicznego oraz wybranych zmiennych je kształtujących na przykładzie województwa dolnośląskiego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** bezpieczeństwo narodowe, bezpieczeństwo ekonomiczne, region, determinanty, województwo dolnośląskie.