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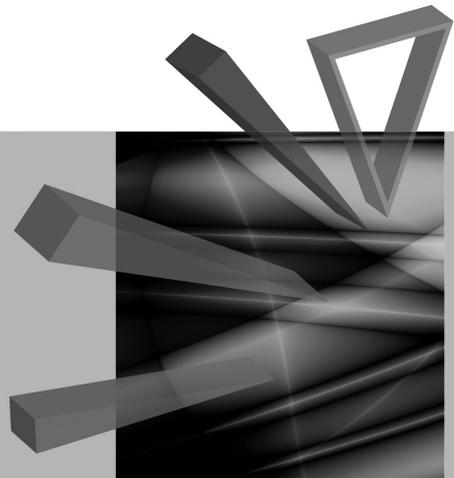
Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu

RESEARCH PAPERS

of Wrocław University of Economics

324

Economy and Space



edited by

Stanisław Korenik

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Publishing House of Wrocław University of Economics
Wrocław 2013

Copy-editing: Agnieszka Flasińska

Layout: Barbara Łopusiewicz

Proof-reading: Barbara Cibis

Typesetting: Comp-rajt

Cover design: Beata Dębska

This publication is available at www.ibuk.pl, www.ebscohost.com,
and in The Central and Eastern European Online Library www.ceeol.com
as well as in the annotated bibliography of economic issues of BazEkon
http://kangur.uek.krakow.pl/bazy_ae/bazekon/nowy/index.php

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Wrocław 2013

ISSN 1899-3192

ISBN 978-83-7695-391-5

The original version: printed

Printing: Printing House TOTEM

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CONTEMPORARY SPATIAL PLANNING AND CASE OF POLAND

Abstract: The paper presents information about changes in social and economic spheres caused by the technological progress and development of information society. The author aims at showing how all those phenomena would impact spatial planning. The paper contains short description of the role of spatial approach in the contemporary economy and of the evolution of approaches in spatial planning. The analysis of advantages and deficiencies of spatial planning in Poland is included.

Keywords: space, spatial organization, planning approaches, Poland.

1. Introduction

Progressive development of Europe integration causes growth of interest in space problems. The spatial development allows for greater engagement of local communities in the processes of social and economic transformation and that is why countries, which have been European Union members for a short time, can face the challenges. Besides, for managing units and societies knowledge about location of natural, technical, social, economic and political conditions defining their operations is very important. So the way of location of individual economic subjects, forming their interrelations, building their concentrations, differentiating forms, types and effects of their activities in a space all these factors play particular role in the analyses of social and economic structure (see more in [Lösch 1961]).

Modern and still deepening diversity of the world requires analyses of spatial, social and economic structures, processes occurring in these structures and phenomena resulting from association between people and environment [Kuciński 1997, pp. 5–13]. Aforementioned analyses should be conducted on the basis of various theories and models related to forming settlement units [Dąbrowski 1995, pp. 197, 198].

Moreover, contemporary mechanisms of social and economic development of space the determinants of which are technological progress, evolution of informative society and globalization of economy create new conditions for regions and cities [Walsh 2014]. Spatial concentration follows due to acceleration of metropolization processes and expansion of networking.

It is worth to underline that today we are in the early stages in the evolution toward a networked economy. The age of alliance capitalism and the maturation of the knowledge economy demand a reconfiguration of the role of each of the three main organizing mechanisms in a market-oriented economy; and indeed, of the very structure of capitalism itself [Olechnicka 2000, p. 37]. Such a reconfiguration is primarily the result, on the one hand, of a shift in the origins of wealth in most industrial societies from natural resources to created assets and especially all forms of knowledge – and, on the other, of the widening geographical spread of all kinds of value-adding activity.

2. A spatial approach to the contemporary economy

At present, various forms of spatial economy are determined by means of spatial planning, the main instrument covering (in the light of present legislature) all activities aimed at satisfying the requirement of well-balanced development of the regions. Spatial planning involves organization of space to serve human needs, adopting spatial order and sustainable development as fundamentals of these activities, while at the same time taking into account all mutual relations between regions as well as the superior interests of the nation. Since spatial planning is addressed in another part of this publication, let us continue with the subject of spatial organization. It must be noted, however, that the planning processes should consider space and elements of the environment as rare commodities, emphasizing the need for their rational utilization [Hurlimann, March 2012].

Spatial organization may be considered as sum of human activities in space, resulting in both negative and positive effects. According to R. Domański, the scientific dimension of spatial economy should be interpreted as a postulate for supplementing the main trend of economics with spatial aspects, since all earlier approaches in economics were predominantly a-spatial [Domański 2006, p. 16]. In the opinion of the author, “any economic theorem that neglects the spatial dimension is incomplete and offers a simplified representation of reality” [Domański 2006, p.17]. Modern spatial economy, both in theoretical and practical aspects, is a multi-aspectual discipline of human life (see more in [Miszczak 2008]), shaped by premises presented in Figure 1.

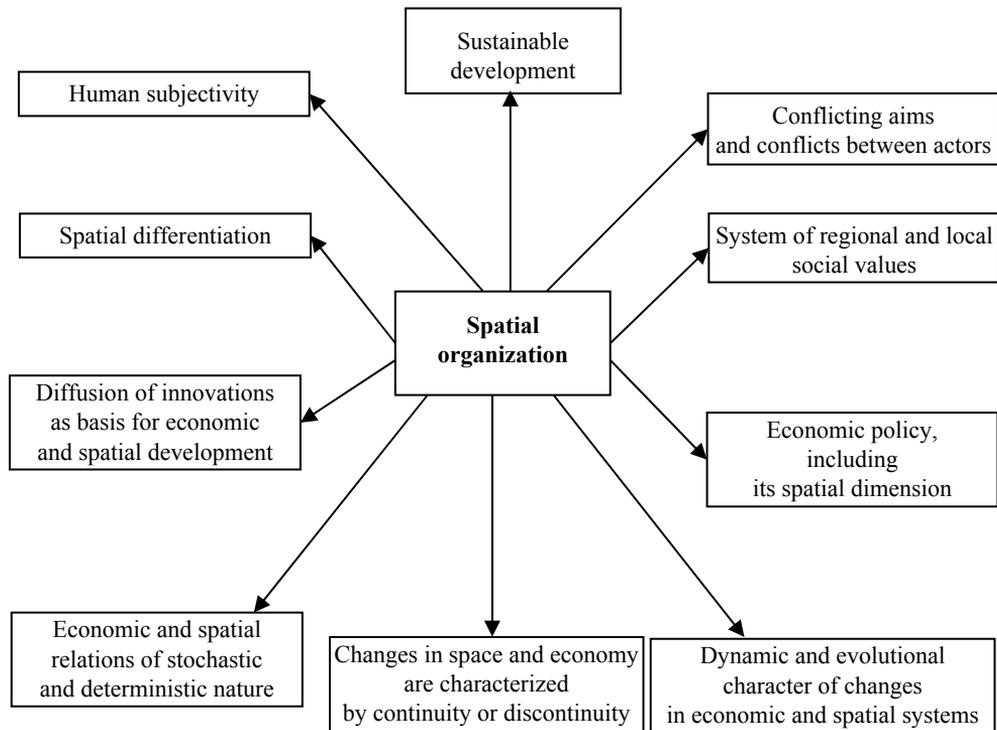


Figure 1. Premises of the current approach to spatial economy

Source: own research based on [Domański 2006, p. 18].

Spatial policy and spatial planning, as concepts closely related to spatial economy, are – to some extent – complementary, since spatial policy sets goals of spatial economy, while spatial planning offers the instrumental base for their realization. On the other hand, organization of space is a term related to the state of space (both natural environment and anthropogenic elements of the environment), which is an effect of human activities (or nonfeasance). Attributes of the organization process include spatial order, preservation of landscape (together with architectural and urban planning elements), eco-development, protection of cultural heritage, etc.

Coming back to spatial policy, it may be defined (after W.M. Gaczek) as deliberate and conscious efforts of public authorities (state and local administration) to organize and utilize the space in a rational manner, resulting in spatial order and proper functioning of socio-economic system of particular territorial unit [Gaczek 2003, p. 11]. The author makes a clear distinction between passive and active spatial policy. In respect to fundamental goals of spatial policy, J. Słodczyk postulates the following distinction [Korenik, Słodczyk (Eds.) 2005, p. 13]:

- 1) coordination of spatial dimension of public activities, by correlating them in the aspects of time, space and effect;
- 2) stimulation of comprehensive development, effected through a wide range of incentives and inspirations;
- 3) serving as a platform for discussion between various actors of spatial policy, with the aim of reconciling particular interests with those of general public.

The last of the important elements of spatial economy, taking recently a lot of attention and manifested in qualitative perspective (also immaterial) is the notion of spatial order. Spatial order is defined as a form of spatial organization that can be perceived as harmonious entity, arranging in ordered fashion all determinants and requirements of space, i.e. functional, socio-economic, environmental, cultural and compositional/esthetic qualities of space. In effect, spatial order should be manifested in such an arrangement of forms and functions of spatial organization that, on the one hand, offers optimization and rationality of relations between individual elements of space, and, on the other, preserves landscape and esthetics of the environment, forming a “legible” spatial structure.

Moreover, in the late 20th century market-based economies, as in earlier phases of capitalism, a privately owned and managed firm remains the critical wealth-creating agent. But, over the years, and particularly in the last two decades, the criteria for its success, the ingredients of its core competencies and its territorial boundaries have all changed; as, indeed, have its relationships with other firms. Similarly, the emergence of an innovation-led global economy, with all its uncertainties and the difficulties of national macroeconomic management, has demanded that national governments reconsider their role and how in particular their actions, for good or bad, may affect the dynamic comparative advantage of resources and the competitive advantages of firms in world market. Also, because firm-specific created assets are increasingly mobile across national boundaries, national governments need to recognize and take account of each other macro-organizational policies. In so doing, they may, and do, affect the functions and boundaries of firms [Harrison et al. 1996]; and this means that any discussion of the changing nature of the firm, which does not consider the changing role of government, will be inadequate.

Mentioned processes have twofold form. The first one are processes of spatial and functional integration among adjacent metropolitan areas – giving rise to merging of these spatial units. Second – accretion of co-dependences and functional coherences among centres, which causes functional integration due to occurrence of lots of feed-backs. Maintenance of hitherto existing competitive position, not to mention its increase, forces more intensive and effective cooperation based on knowledge and innovations among settlement units [Nyholm et al. 2001]. The operations directed to the creation of network system will allow for coping with modern world economy’s requirements and achieving

advantageous competitive position by cities/regions and their milieus not only on national scale but first of all on international one. So, that big cities in Poland [like Warsaw, Cracow, Wrocław, Katowice, Gdańsk, Poznań, Łódź] will soon fulfil in optimal range node' s role in global network and they will be characterized by following features [Kukliński 2000, p. 62]:

- directing, meaning assembly of abilities and development' s capabilities of strategic and decision functions on the highest level in case of both enterprises and other institutions;
- global feature, it means achievement of certain critical mass of competences and services allowing for relative self-sufficiency;
- adaptability, which is understood as fitting in to city economic and social systems facilitating productive functions.

Recapitulating, functional integration resulting from phenomena of economic cooperation, network connections and hierarchic co-dependences, and technical progress within transmission of information causes internally compact configuration in the sphere of spatial units. Processes of spatial integration follow in the same direction, which can contribute to integrate previously isolated city-region organisms.

3. Characteristics of transformations in spatial planning

The governments apply spatial planning to a broad spectrum of policy objectives, including improving regional economic performance, creating a more rational organisation of land uses, balancing demands for development with the need to protect the environment, to strengthen social cohesion and to take advantage of the opportunities presented by globalisation and technological innovations. Those determinants of spatial development cause the evolution of approaches in spatial planning (Table 1).

The increase in the number of new technological inventions causes changes within the global, economic and political decisions. What is more, it affects the individualistic lifestyle with various types of accommodation styles. These great transformations make urban and regional development highly unpredictable. This is why the dramatic breakthrough of the PC and Internet was not predicted. "Planning has therefore to research and to develop strategies and instruments for processing change, for encouraging, facilitating and connecting the ongoing processes of urban growth and transformation, for supporting the plural forces shaping our environment" [Conway 1999]. We need to develop long-term instruments (sustainability) as well as short-term, flexible tools (for example special experimental zones, etc.) for dealing with the dynamics of growth.

Table 1. Evolution of approaches in spatial planning

	Old planning approach [managerial]	Transitional approach [incremental]	New planning approach [entrepreneurial]
Main goals	Allocation of land	Spatial redevelopment and infrastructure growth	Economic development Environmental and social sustainability
Concepts [dynamic]	Implementation and tactics	Open planning	Strategic vision
Functions	Provision of public services	Focus on project	Promoting innovation, risk taking and development
Substantive aspects or forms [static]	Centre/periphery rationale	Redevelopment of city centres, strengthening of rural/urban linkages	Poly-centricity urban corridors
Actors	Public actors	Implication of the private sector	A broad set of stakeholders, numerous public-private partnerships
Regional and local Dimension	Hierarchical relationships between central/regional and local control	Emerging role of region	Strategic aspects increasingly decentralised

Source: [OECD 2007, pp. 23–25].

The processing of transformations is not just the management of ongoing changes, following and reacting to market forces. By providing public communication spaces for the processing of the “new”, planning can develop “market-forcing” strategies.

The planning tools are not only useful for the control of a space but also provide infrastructures needed for the urban socio-economic transformations related to the development of information technologies. Instruments have to be developed to manage the densities of connections of urban and media communication spaces, to enhance the differences between the nodes of the network city and to strengthen the adaptation of the dual city.

With the improvements of information and communication technologies the strengthening of (urban/local) interest groups and the processing of urban transformations (what we call today “urban/regional planning”) will become more and more a public affair [Schaefer 1996]. We can already observe that citizens are more interested and get more easily involved in the development of their direct localities than in the country or city scale. Public involvement in the decision-making process concerning urban localities will support this trend of the regionalization of politics. “The processing of urban transformations will become more and more instrumental subject in the socio-political process of developing communal visions. Urban and regional planning, transformed into an event-

communication space and entertainment zone, will become an important element in the increasingly mediated decisions of the future” [Moss 1986].

Strategic planning should be understood as a key tool for competitiveness. Many countries [OECD 2008, p. 35] that have problems with planning and lack of a multi-sector approach have moved to a more dynamic approach in recent years, often called “strategic planning”. This more comprehensive approach has a diversified dimension and takes a broader perspective than administrative areas of municipalities. This is especially true for large metropolitan regions. Although there are many difficulties, innovation in planning is crucial to better adjust public policy to local development needs.

4. Spatial planning in Poland

Insufficient spatial planning creates problems for infrastructure development, particularly for transport and housing. Although municipal spatial planning is in principle a legal requirement, many Polish local governments do not have proper planning systems. Only 30% of territory of Poland has spatial plans and these focus on administrative borders of municipalities rather than on functional areas and rarely involve cooperation among municipalities. Upper levels of government (region, central government) are unable to enforce the implementation of strategic decisions [Vanhove 1999, pp. 57–63]. As a result, planning does not play enough the role of coordinating and adopting spatial values to policies. The lack of adequate functional spatial planning has adverse consequences for both urban and rural areas. In large cities, it hinders the development of integrated transport systems and contributes to a rapid increase in the use of cars to the detriment of public transport, thereby increasing congestion and pollution. It has also slowed the development of housing, and Poland now faces a shortage of some 1 million dwellings, particularly for social housing, which again reduces labour mobility and reinforces growing urban sprawl. Poor spatial planning also adversely affects rural areas [Gawroński et al. 2010, pp. 53–69]. With the increased price of land since EU accession, rural communities tend to speculate on land rather than develop a strategic long-term vision on its best use.

Although spatial planning is a legal requirement and a prerogative of local governments, most of them do not have proper planning systems. The 2003 Spatial Planning Act requires that communities prepare a study on future physical development of the commune. In 2003, the Parliament abrogated all local development plans of Poland, but did not make the design of new plans for urban land use compulsory (see more in [*Narodowy Plan Rozwoju 2007–2013*]). Some municipalities lack the capacity (both financial and in terms of human resources) to make such a plan. When development plans are absent, exemptions for specific

projects are possible through an administrative procedure, which involves some degree of arbitrariness.

Even when planning is well organised at the municipal level, it is weak, because of a narrow focus and lack of long-term vision. Physical development plans are not well connected with strategic plans and the planning focuses on administrative borders of communities rather than on functional areas. The communities do not cooperate enough in the planning process and have no incentive to do so because the decisions on the use of space are sub-optimal. The upper levels of government (regional or central ones) are unable to enforce the implementation of strategic decisions. Regions (voivodships) have responsibility for planning systems, because they prepare the regional spatial development plans. However, these plans are not binding on municipalities and tend to remain quite general and superficial. In particular, the communities have many ways to avoid unwanted programmes and projects, e.g. by prolonging procedures for preparing local plans, undertaking lengthy social and judicial processes, etc. There is no comprehensive spatial planning that encompasses physical and socio-economic developments at the regional scale, even though regions are encouraged to do this. The planning documents prepared at the various administrative levels are also often not coherent.

Most of the planning activities in Poland are performed at the local and regional level by local governmental institutions. Spatial Planning Acts were introduced in 1961, 1984, 1994 and 2003. The basic regulatory instrument for spatial planning is the Spatial Planning and Spatial Management Act of the 27 March 2003 which defines the scope and procedures related to appropriation of land for specific uses and the principles for its sustainable development, and regulates the means of resolving conflicts of interests that might arise among citizens, local communities and the state.

Other important acts of Parliament impose certain tasks and obligations on spatial planning actors, with the result that planning, building and environmental protection are regulated by completely various acts: the Environmental Protection and Management Act (the framework for many detailed regulations concerning forests, water or waste management, protection of nature or arable land), the Building Code (in relation to construction and engineering activities), the Law on Real Property Management.

The lack of legal stability in planning systems over the past two decades in the 20th century has also contributed to an increase in “spatial chaos”. Responsibility for national physical (or spatial) development policy and other forms of planning at the central governmental level has been lying with the Ministry of Regional Development since 2006.

The weaknesses of spatial planning systems have adverse effects on urban areas, particularly in terms of housing and public transport systems. The lack of

functional spatial planning at city scale impedes the development of integrated transport systems and contributes to a rapid increase in the use of cars to the detriment of public transport. This increases congestion and pollution in cities. Besides, the lack of zoning has slowed the development of housing. Given the legacy of under-developed housing from the period of central planning, Poland now faces a shortage of some one million dwellings, particularly for social housing. In addition to reducing labour mobility, the shortage of affordable housing reinforces a growing urban sprawl (see more in [Fujita et al. 1999]). The rural population started to increase again after 2000, especially in the neighbourhood of large cities, owing to the rise in housing prices. This new rural migration should continue until 2030 (the share of urban population is forecast to drop to 57%, while the share of rural population should reach 43%).

Although urban sprawl and migration to rural areas can provide new opportunities for rural development, the new mobility patterns, with increasing numbers of people commuting long distances every day, require better planning. However, because of the increase in land prices, especially around large cities, the surrounding communities tend to speculate on land rather than develop a strategic long-term vision on its best use. The previous government therefore intended to amend the Law on Spatial Planning and the Construction Law. The process is still under way and the issue of cooperation with transport infrastructure investments has not been fully dealt with in the draft legislation. Two crucial challenges – for both competitiveness and cohesion objectives – are linked to the integration of housing and transport developments into broad strategic planning.

Spatial planning needs to be linked to initiatives targeting enterprises and job creation. Urban space in Poland has suffered from the construction in the 1960s and 1970s of gigantic complexes of block housing, usually forming a ring around Polish towns and cities. Today, such complexes represent sub-standard housing with high costs of exploitation and rapid depreciation. In some Polish cities such high-rise constructions are inhabited by 30–40% of residents, often low-income groups. As mentioned earlier, rehabilitation of these post-industrial (post-military) areas is crucial for both social and competitiveness reasons but will probably take decades. Management of town centres, where the housing stock is old and often run-down presents another challenge.

Poor spatial planning also adversely affects rural areas. For example, neighbouring communes may build individual and thus more costly sewage systems. In the absence of strategic planning, the use made of rural areas creates negative externalities and the tourism potential of some rural areas is not well exploited. Although the price of land remains below the EU average in rural areas, it has increased rapidly since the accession to the EU and there is a great deal of speculation. Additional difficulties arise from problems for changing the zoning of land from agricultural use to building purposes.

Table 2. Allocation of functions among tiers of local governments in Poland

	Commune	District	Voivodship
Strategic and physical planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for local development • Local physical master plans • Granting building permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for development of county • Building inspection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic regional planning • Regional development • Contracts with central government • Water supply and sewerage • Waste collection and disposal
Roads and communal infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street cleaning • Street lighting • Parks and green areas • Conservation • Central heating • Local roads • City public • Transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County road network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional road network • Water management [flood protection]
Public order and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City guards • Voluntary fire brigades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public order and security (police) • Civil defence 	
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindergartens and primary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary school education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some higher education facilities
Health		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public health and sanitary services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional hospital
Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social services, such as housing benefits, services for elderly, social welfare benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment measures and fighting • Care for homeless people 	
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of social housing • Management of municipal housing 		

Source: [Swianiewicz 2002].

Additionally, planning as a social science should develop new strategies and tools to control the ongoing transformations of the current network city, district, region, etc. “The emergence of the IT spaces for planning issues will strongly affect the planning process by supporting public involvement” [Miszczak 2010]. “Public media spaces and public hybrid interfaces are defined as the infrastructure for urban/regional planning, for developing communal vision. These communication spaces for urban milieus could develop into very important forums for the regionalized and globalized politics of the future” [Sargm 2004].

5. Conclusions

Summing up, it is necessary to stress that those essential changes in spatial structures occurred at the beginning of the 21st century. The regions as basic spatial units have undergone long evolution from units which had only auxiliary and administrative character to full subjectiveness. This caused appearance of new unit in social and economic processes. These reasons of changes are indubitably different. They included first of all acceleration and intensification of exertion of process of development and keeping company of this process progressing globalization of world economy and also social phenomena such as development of local governments. That is why the increase of phenomena connected with decentralization follows; it means the role of state authorities in creation of spatial development processes is limited (the meaning of intraregional policy increases). Progressing economization of space and processes occurring in it have got decisive influence over situation of regions. It causes transformations of individual areas – they often run in spontaneous and unexpected way. The transformations are not only connected with changes of spatial units positions in economic processes appearing in scale of economy of country or world but also with their internal structure. Another important feature of these processes is disparity of level of their appearance in several spatial units. It causes accumulation of disproportions in the level of development of individual parts of state. As this fact is clear in situation of comparison of least developed countries and high developed ones, in space of individual states it is not advantageous phenomenon and is not always explained in rational way. The internalization of cumulative potential in the networks takes place in the learning region (which is high developed area), by the possibility of complementary usage of resources in existing and developing cooperation. However, we should remember that creation of the networks in some area is a selective process, it happens at varied intensity in different places in space [Zuskovitch, Justman 1995]. Areas with suitable capital (also human resources with the highest qualifications) and knowledge become leaders in this process. The knots of networks are situated in these areas (these are mostly big urban centres of modern structure). New spatial structure created in these conditions is what we call “new quality”, however at the same time it is not continuous. This means that apart from the areas in the space where the social and economic activity is being accumulated, there are areas which do not belong to the network and do not benefit from the synergy effect. This seems to be a natural occurrence, but the exclusion of a single area is not permanent. According to the changeable logic of network where the changes happen rapidly, the places which appear not to be very attractive nowadays can become desirable elements of the network in the future, e.g. because of their unique nature, location value or other yet not known reason. Nonetheless it

is more important for a spatial unit to be able to create the basis for an effective development and spatial planning by its innovative nature or unique potential.

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WSPÓŁCZESNE PLANOWANIE PRZESTRZENNE NA PRZYKŁADZIE POLSKI

Streszczenie: W opracowaniu zawarte są informacje o zmianach zachodzących w przestrzeni społeczno-ekonomicznej, wywołanych postępowaniem technologicznym i rozwojem społeczeństwa informacyjnego oraz o wpływie tych zjawisk na system planowania przestrzennego. W sposób syntetyczny opisane są rola podejścia przestrzennego we współczesnej gospodarce i ewolucja sposobów planowania przestrzennego. Analiza wad i zalet systemu planowania przestrzennego została dokonana na przykładzie Polski.

Słowa kluczowe: przestrzeń, organizacja przestrzenna, sposoby planowania, Polska.