

## EDITORIAL

Today we are handing to our readers the third issue of our academic quarterly in 2017, which in terms of volume is very extensive, and in terms of content is extremely interesting and has an interdisciplinary character. It contains as many as twelve original articles in the fields of social sciences and humanities, especially in economics, history, political sciences and international relations, as well as two reviews. The articles are the result of research carried out by individual authors under various research projects. Economists and political scientists, specialists and experts on international relations, as well as students, doctoral students, teachers and journalists should find this issue interesting. We also recommend it to politicians and decision makers at home and abroad as it contains a number of original scholarly papers devoted to current economic, financial, social, political and international problems with which the European Union, including Poland, and the whole world is struggling today. It shows how quickly the international order and its determinants change. It also reveals the complexity and unusual dynamics of the modern world and the problems that politicians do not cope with, and which are often the result of their ignorance and previous mistakes, hasty and ill-considered decisions. One of the greatest ailments of the modern world and of the European Union is, unfortunately, the lack of wise political elites. We therefore hope that, just like all the previously published volumes of “Myśl Ekonomiczna i Polityczna” [‘Economic and Political Thought’], also this one will be of interest to a wide circle of readers and will be welcomed by both scholars and politicians. I hope they will have time to study it.

The presented issue of the quarterly, according to the previous practice and rules adopted by the editorial office, consists of two parts: the first one which is devoted to broadly understood economic issues, and the second pertaining to political issues and the international situation in Europe and in the world. Just like every year, this issue (always the third) is printed in English in order to increase the circle of our readers in Poland and abroad.

In the first part we are publishing six articles. It opens with Andrzej Kozina's article entitled 'Selected theories of the firm as a base for negotiation description' in which the author carries out a careful analysis of several theories of the firm and points out their usefulness in describing negotiation processes that take place in a given company. The author critically analyses the following theories: of inter-organisational relationships, transactional costs, stakeholders, contract and agency. The presentation of each of them comprises two components: its synthetic characteristics and determining its place in conducting negotiation processes in a company. In the summing up section of the paper the conclusions from the considerations are presented as well as the directions of further studies are indicated.

The aim of the considerations in the next article entitled 'Spectral analysis and the application of filters in the examination of business cycles' by Krzysztof Beck is to present the general idea of spectral analysis and details of design of the Hodrick-Prescott, Baxter-King and Christiano-Fitzgerald filters. The second part of this article presents the results of empirical studies on the example of Poland and Greece and shows the difference in the results obtained when different filters are used.

The next, third article in this part, entitled 'How charismatic leader drives strategic results: Case of Górnik Zabrze football club', authored by Dariusz Pietyszuk and Bartłomiej Bańkowski, shows on the basis of the leadership theory that companies managed by a charismatic leader, personally responsible for strategy development, have higher volatility of results than companies with a planned, formal process of strategy formulation. According to the authors, it is connected with the fact that strong leaders may have clear and well-defined visions, but may also be wrong and the execution their of vision may lead to a significant failure.

The subsequent, fourth article by Waldemar Florczak, entitled 'Outlays on legal aid in Poland. Could we get more out of it?' contains interesting reflections on free legal and civic counselling in Poland. The author shows here the current state of affairs, the legal principles and costs and prospects of free legal and civic counselling in our country.

Then there is the fifth, analytical text 'Tax policies in Poland, Slovakia, and Bulgaria: sitting on a ticking bomb or catching up with the West', written by Spasimir Domaradzki. The author analyses and compares tax policies of Poland, Slovakia and Bulgaria, pointing to their shortcomings and defining them as ticking bombs. The research presented in this article leads to the conclusion that, in essence, the discussion of whether a tax system is linear or not is secondary because all the examined tax systems are in fact 'flattened'

in practice. Secondly, the author stresses that the pursuit of direct foreign investment must not be blind and uncritical, since the experiences of these three countries show distinct and, most importantly, not only positive effects. As Poland and Slovakia are approaching the challenges of a 'medium-growth trap', Bulgaria still needs to 'catch up' with the West. Thus, the former two countries should reconsider the weaknesses of their taxation systems, whereas Bulgaria should reassess its approach towards foreign direct investments and change the direction of its economic policy.

The last article in this part by Krzysztof Falkowski entitled 'Economic aspects of institutional transformation in post-Soviet countries – current state and consequences for their development and competitiveness' is also the first of four further articles that have been prepared for printing by a team of researchers led by Tomasz Stępniewski from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin and are actually devoted to socio-political and economic problems of post-Soviet countries.

The second part, concerning political science, contains six original scholarly texts, resulting from research conducted by their authors. It opens with Konrad Świder's article entitled 'Emancipation of the nomenclature as a catalyst for the breakup of the Soviet Union'. In this article the author shows and analyses the causes of the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, which he divides into ideological, political, social, economic, nomenclature or nationality reasons. According to the author, the emancipation of the nomenclature was one of the manifestations of the multi-faceted modernisation of the USSR and its collision with the communist doctrine as an ideology.

Further in this part of the presented quarterly there is Aleksandra Kuczyńska-Zonik's article entitled 'Integration of Russian speakers in the Baltic states'. As the title shows the aim of the article is to compare integration policies of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as well as adaptation models of Russian speakers in these countries after they regained independence in 1991. The author shows that the Baltic states have used different integration models depending on their historical, political and social determinants. She argues that the effectiveness of this integration has depended both on the national strategy and on the openness of ethnic groups to adaptation in the new environment.

In turn, Tomasz Stępniewski in the article 'Ukraine's position in the European Union's Neighbourhood Policy' discusses Ukraine's position in both the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership project based on this policy. In conclusion of his considerations, the author states that Ukraine's integration with the European Union means for this country the

need to make a civilization choice and stresses that it is Ukraine which is the biggest challenge among all countries located in the eastern borders of the European Union. Due to its geopolitical and geoeconomic position Ukraine is a key state not only for the European Union but also for Russia.

Further in this part there is an interesting text written by Jarosław Jura and Kaja Kałużyńska entitled 'Still more about history than about the present – picture of Russia, Germany and Ukraine in the Polish media in the second half of 2013'. The results of the cluster analysis showed that these three countries were presented mainly negatively by the Polish media. In addition, a surprisingly big number of articles, – the authors stress – in which Germany, Russia and Ukraine were described, also included historical references, especially those relating to the Second World War.

The last but not one text in this part of the quarterly by Józef M. Fiszer, entitled 'European Union and China in the twenty-first century – problems, opportunities and threats' is devoted to relations between the European Union and the PRC today and in the following years of the twenty-first century. The author writes here that the European Union and China have the status of strategic partners in mutual relations and seek to develop cooperation in all areas, but they have different positions on and attitudes to many important matters.

The last article in this part of the quarterly is Tomasz G. Grosse's text 'Geopolitical strategy of a smaller state: the case study of Poland's presence in the EU'. The paper analyses strategic choices made by a smaller state that does not have the status of a great power and enters into the structure of European integration. The purpose of this analysis is to try to show (on the example of Poland) how selected theories present the role of small states and their basic strategic geopolitical choices.

The presented issue of "Myśl Ekonomiczna i Polityczna" ['Economic and Political Thought'] closes with two extensive reviews of the latest, published in 2017, scholarly books devoted to the ethnic identity of the population living in contemporary Belgium and the European Union and its crises.

We wish all our readers interesting reading and we encourage everyone to cooperate with our editorial board and Łazarski University, one of the best universities in Poland.

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