

Polish Pomerania during integration of Middle and West Europe

ALEKSANDER SZWICHTENBERG

Technical University of Koszalin,
Faculty of Economy and Administration, Poland

Abstract

Pomerania (Pomeranian and West Pomeranian provinces) – is one of the most important economical districts in Poland. It is characteristic for it's great attractiveness of capital expenditure – B category (in a 5-levels scale) and for it's high index of competition (Hellwig's index for Pomeranian province – 0.459, West Pomeranian province – 0.398). This is also the region where are lots of problems because of it's high level of unemployment – 20.3% of the highest crime in the country etc. Nevertheless in Pomerania there are the best chances to soften those problems in new structures of European Union.

Key words: Pomerania, economy, tourism, European Union

Introduction

Linking on Poland with European Union will cause inclusion of Poland into globalisation processes. This will consider both individual regions and also sectors of economy. The first of above problems will be discussed in this referee on Pomerania example, the second by analysis of tourist sector.

Pomerania which consists of provinces (Pomerania and West Pomerania) is one of the most important economical regions in Poland. It is a cohesive and strictly limited geographical region. It is also a historical country which has been formed for ten centuries. The social and economical development was determined by its locality at Baltic Sea and some characteristic aspects for new lands after Ice Age. Both provinces cover the region of 41 thousand square kilometers, and this is 12% of the country. Being examined region is characteristic for many positive aspects that foster economical development for instance: convenient geographical and geopolitical locality, many accomplishments (for agriculture, tourism, economy of forests and fishing) etc. Nevertheless there are many aspects which will not foster it's development after joining Poland to European Union. There maybe failure of agriculture, floating, fishing and also many social problems as: high unemployment, emigration of people from countries to cities, crime etc.

One of the fundamental causes being realized by UE is regional policy, causing dynamic development of delayed regions (mainly all countryside), reconstruction of regions where previous methods did not come true (mining, PGR), provide new

employment for people, protection of environment, development of infrastructure of communication. Polish policy is coincident with policy of UE. Nevertheless the author's thesis is that two provinces working within enough historical and geographical homogeneous region as Pomerania is, will be the obstacle in actualizing the policy of UE. Pomerania maybe the partner for Brandenvurgia or Skania.

On the other hand there is a thesis that within such consolidated region there should be not two smaller administrative bodies but three – where Pomerania is strictly partitioned off.

Social and economical condition of being examined region against a background of the situation in Poland

Both provinces Pomeranian and West Pomeranian, similar to other Polish regions has been reckoned among poorly developed once which need supporting of public in the process of structural adaptations. Among first of them GDP per one inhabitant in 1998 was 36% of the middle level GDP of the Community and in the second – 35% (Mazowieckie – the highest, 53%, Lulelskie – the lowest 26%) – Klamut (2002). It is worth to emphasize that structural funds are provided for the development of the regions where GDP per for 1 inhabitant is lower than 75% of European average.

Those regions will be important beneficiaries of different founds of EU financial support (the program of border cooperation INTERREG, founds of consistence, equalizing development chances – program EQUAL, structural founds).

Tab. 1 The comparison of competitiveness, investment attractiveness, GDP per capita and potential of regions with granted share in finance supporting of regional development.

Lp.	Province	Share in %	Potential of regions	Competitiveness	Attractiveness of investment	GDP per capita
1	Mazowieckie	11.26	74.58	0.793	A	23 760
2	Śląskie	19.19	66.20	0.559	A	17 565
3	Dolnośląskie	7.72	50.71	0.526	B	16 273
4	Lubelskie	7.30	33.13	0.378	D	11 112
5	Wielkopolskie	7.05	52.13	0.532	B	16 747
6	Podkarpackie	7.04	37.32	0.178	D	11 685
7	Małopolskie	6.67	43.10	0.493	C	14 231
8	Warmińsko-Mazurskie	6.49	31.59	0.287	D	12 341
9	Pomeranian	5.84	47.71	0.459	B	16 120
10	Łódzkie	5.69	38.19	0.426	C	14 497
11	Kujawsko-Pomorskie	5.68	34.84	0.323	C	14 121
12	West Pomeranian	4.96	43.65	0.398	B	15 925
13	Świętokrzyskie	4.62	21.56	0.239	D	12 435

Lp.	Province	Share in %	Potential of regions	Competitiveness	Attractiveness of investment	GDP per capita
14	Podlaskie	3.99	26.71	0.243	D	11 580
15	Lubuskie	2.79	30.51	0.221	C	14 444
16	Opolskie	2.71	23.56	0.261	C	13 320

Explanations: Column 3 – share of provinces intended for actions resulting from programs of provinces; 4 – potential of regions in 2001 counted by the method of factor analysis on the basis of components: general economy situation, economical activity of population, activity of citizens, quality of local infrastructure and attractiveness as place of residence; 5 – Hellwig's index with different aspects of competitiveness; it is economic potential, modernity of economic structure, the level of development of technical infrastructure, accessibility of communication, competitiveness of job, the level of having the advantage of market's changes, barriers and emergency; 6 – taxonomic indexes consisting of accessibility of communication, absorptency of market, market of job, hinterland of industry, surroundings of business, transformation of economy, attractiveness of tourism and the state of environment; 7 – GDP per one inhabitant in 1999.

Source: U. Markowska-Przybyła (2002).

The characteristic feature of both provinces is its high investment attractiveness (Tab.1). They are classed among polish provinces of B group (gradation in 5 ranks). There is also its high competitiveness. The index of Hellwig for Pomerania province is 0.459 and for West Pomerania – 0.398.

U. Markowska-Przybyła (2002, p.249) equivalently in meaning proves that the largest granted share in finance supporting regional development is for provinces which are developed the best, the largest competitiveness, the most attractive for investors, and with the largest potential of development. This is not in accordance with EU policy.

Demographic and social problems of being examined region

Although Pomerania has a lot of social and economical positives it is also the most problematic in Poland. Especially it concerns all of the middle Pomerania, rated among retarded regions, which are marked by their highest unemployment or crime.

One of the largest contemporary problems in Poland is unemployment. The rate of unemployment in West Pomerania in 2000 was 20.3% (Batóg, Bąk, Markowicz, 2001). Quite rapid increase of unemployment has been observed since 1997, especially after having joined previous province of Koszalin to the present administration where there was the deepest unemployment in Poland (46 position among 49 provinces). In January 2002 the rate of unemployment was 24% (Poland – 18%, EU – 7.8%. That index in 1997–2001 was rising in average at about 15% a year (Bąk, Markowicz, 2002).

Unemployed are mainly young, elementary educated people who worked not longer than a year. In opinion of B. Bartóg, I. Bąk, I. Markowicz (2001) The best situation as to unemployment in 2000 was in of town districts (Szczecin, Świnoujście, Koszalin) and of Police district which is situated nearby its capital, and also of Kołobrzeg district – with well developed basis of tourist. The highest unemployment appeared in the middle of the province. An alarming was aspect of very high increase in 1990–2000 in big cities (coming to end periods of protection for workers of being restructured companies, depression of floating).

Researches being held by I. Bąk and I. Markowicz have proved that crime in provinces of north-west Poland is definitely higher than in the country. Those authors consider unemployment to be one of the main reason of frustration people who are without any resources. Considering the number of found out crimes per 1000 inhabitants in 1996 Gdańsk province was at the top of the list, Szczecin province was the third after the first (Warsaw province was 2nd). Previous Koszalin province was 7th and Słupsk province – 11th.

One of the most important problems of contemporary Pomerania is living in the country. In the west province there are for instance 40% of unemployment (Bąk, Markowicz, 2002). In 9 to 20 districts the share of unemployment living in the country exceeds by 50% and in Koszalin district – 76.5%.

Demographic changes in Pomerania are also disadvantageous. One of the most important aspect among them is massive drop off that region. In opinion of M. Gardzińska (2002) there was a negative migration index of balance in the area of all of the province (people mainly resigned of living in this area). The same author says that the same fact was observed in Szczecin in 1981–1999. It concerns mainly people of over 35 years old. They were moving to bigger cities (Warsaw, Poznań) or to Dobra Szczecińska or Kołbaskowo.

The signal of assimilation foreign style of life was the fact that wealthy people started to build their own houses in the outskirts what concerns also the area of West Pomerania. In the opinion of Jażewicz (2002) constant population rate and concentration of population is especially noticed in the area of Gdynia – Sopot – Gdańsk

Being held researches proved that in 1982–2000 while transformation there appeared many disadvantages of demographic trends. Among others the rate of growth of population in the country has evidently decreased, demographical dynamics has been weakened too, there also appeared a problem with growing old people. This author thinks that such situation is not in the result of increasing demographic depression but some other aspects (difficult situation on the work market in Pomerania, stagnation in architecture, pauperization of society etc.).

The most spectacular is the decrease of the rate of birth in the country of Pomerania. For instance in Pomerania province it was 16.1% in 1982, 7.7% in 1995 and 6.2% in 2000).

According to demographic prognosis until 2030 there will have been the same processes in all of Poland. It is necessary to emphasize that Pomerania has been classed among four regions in Poland (also małopolskie, wielkopolskie, podkarpackie), where it is expected an encreasing growth of amount of population (plan..., 2002). In West Pomerania it is expected stabilization (it's going to be decrease in at least 8 provinces).

Tourism – adaptation to demands of foreign tourists

Pomerania is the most important tourist region in Poland. Pomerania province is at the top of the list in the country on the point of places to sleep (116.2 thousand places) But Pomerania is the second (94.0 thousand). Together there are 1/3 of places to sleep in the country. We may say that that basis is not adapted to demands of foreign tourists. Most of all there are objects that in the past belonged to workshops, labor unions, government, parties, organizations etc.

Almost none of that objects despite being hold many renovations inside them hasn't been considered a place for tourists. (Szwichtenberg 2001). In the result in the area of Pomerania there are 54.3% of total places to sleep in Polish vacation centers (in the past known as social tourist basis). On the other hand in 127 hotels which are categorized there are in being examined area only 14% places to sleep of that basis in the country. In general in Poland there can be seen constant reduce of previous social basis for the benefit of hotels, motels hostels and private quarters.

In 2001 Pomerania was visited by 1.5 mln foreign tourists (10% of total amount visiting Poland) where 52.6% were Germans (Polish tourism..., 2002). In Pomerania province there were mainly tourist and vocational visits (0.4 mln.) but in West Pomerania there were mainly transits. Examinations prove that tourists from Germany are satisfied with being in Pomerania (Szwichtenberg 2000). The only problem is with Polish roads and tourist information. The author thesis that what depreciates attractiveness of Polish sea coast is reduction of its accessibility (Szwichtenberg 2002). In the result it may cause that Polish sea coast will be in the margin among tourist areas of EU.

Negative results for Pomerania caused by administrative partition of Poland in 1998

Presented in Tab. 1 advantageous economical indexes for Pomerania are not optimistic. In a year time in Poland will be binding new EU rules of regional policy. Then Poland will be among beneficiaries which will get the least from those funds. On the other hand we should remember that qualities of indexes depend on previous provinces: gdańskiego, szczecińskiego. The half of being examined region as Middle Pomerania is one of the most problematic in Poland. Almost all of that region is ranked among regions of the social depression, where the rate of unemployment is higher than 29%, and the share of population that use social violence – 30% (Plan..., 2002). They appear in other parts of both provinces.

Present autonomies of provinces don't conduct well the police of regional development. B. Woś (2002) says that autonomies of province are one of the most important barrier of the regional competitive development in Poland. The author even persuades policy parties into transvalue their programs to accelerate regional reforms in the country, to its decentralization. Especially are acts of integration Pomerania with European areas and development of democracy. That region just like whole Poland systematically links in world wide poles of advanced development among others by starting policy of development, space balancing of EU, realization of international agreements concerning transportation (AGC, AGTC, AGR), participation in forming European Plan of Protected Areas Natura 2000 (Plan..., 2002).

However the most important benefits for being examined both regions are thanks to Baltic cooperation, in which 11 countries placed at the Baltic sea take part (Plan..., 2002). There lives about 103 mln of people. Tricity is one of 10 metropolitan areas (over 1 mln persons). Those provinces has been cooperating for some years in Vision Program and in Strategy Around the Baltic Sea 2010 (VASAB), among others it connects integrated development of seaside areas and islands, cooperation of seaside towns, development of countryside areas.

VASAB program 2010 is completed by consecutive programs, it is Interreg, IIC, IIIB, that will be supported thanks to funds of PHARE CBC

Conclusion

Pomerania, despite many social-economical problems (regression of agriculture and deep-sea fishing, unemployment, large abandon people from countries and towns, growing old of population etc.), has many chances of farther development. Most of all it concerns potential of tourism (accomplishments and infrastructure of tourist) Locality next to the regions of high economy development in Germany, Sweden and Denmark with whome both provinces develop trans bounds cooperation.

References

- BATÓG, B., BAŁ, I., MARKOWICZ, I. (2001): Bezrobocie w woj. zachodniopomorskim, "Wiadomości Statystyczne" nr 4, s. 68–75.
- BAŁ, I., MARKOWICZ, I. (1998): Bezrobocie a przestępczość w województwach północno-zachodnich, "Wiadomości Statystyczne" nr 12, s. 52–57.
- BAŁ, I., MARKOWICZ, I. (2002): Bezrobocie w woj. zachodniopomorskim, "Wiadomości Statystyczne" nr 7, s. 94–98.
- GAZIŃSKA, M. (2001): Analiza niektórych zjawisk demograficznych w woj. zachodniopomorskim, "Wiadomości Statystyczne" nr 1, s. 96–100.
- JAŻEWICZ, I. (2002): Tendencje demograficzne na obszarach wiejskich województwa pomorskiego, In: Społeczne problemy wsi, praca zb. pod red. J. Bańskiego i E. Rydza, t. 2, Warszawa, s. 193–203.
- KLAMUT, M. (2002): Wpływ Unii Europejskiej na generowanie zmian strukturalnych w gospodarce polskich regionów, In: Przekształcenia regionalnych struktur funkcjonalno-przestrzennych, VI, Rozwój regionalny i lokalny a procesy globalizacji, UW Wrocław, s. 28–43.
- MARKOWSKA-PRZYBYŁA, U. (2002): Wspieranie konkurencyjności regionów w polskiej polityce regionalnej, In: Przekształcenia regionalnych struktur funkcjonalno-przestrzennych, VII, Współczesne problemy transformacji w układach lokalnych i regionalnych w Polsce, UW, Wrocław, s. 239–254.
- Plan zagospodarowania przestrzennego województwa pomorskiego, Pomorskie Studia Regionalne, Gdańsk 2002, s. 1–262.
- Szwichtenberg, A. (2000): Goście niemieckojęzyczni na polskim rynku turystycznym, In: Badawcze i metodologiczne problemy turystyki, ZSzB, Kołobrzeg, s. 43–51.
- Szwichtenberg, A. (2001): Gospodarka turystyczna w polskiej strefie nadmorskiej w okresie transformacji, "Zeszyty Naukowe Wydziału Ekonomii i Zarządzania PK" nr 8, 61–78.
- Turystyka polska w 2001 roku. Układ regionalny, Instytut Turystyki, Warszawa 2002, s. 1–163.
- WOŚ, B. (2002): Regiony Europy w procesach globalizacji, In: Przekształcenia regionalnych struktur funkcjonalno-przestrzennych, VI, Rozwój regionalny i lokalny a procesy globalizacji, UW, Wrocław, s. 45–64.