

## Introduction

The present volume of *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis Studia Geographica* consists of 14 articles pointing to problems and topics currently analyzed in academic research in fields like geography, social-economic geography, physical geography, geography of tourism and didactics of geography. Most of the authors, the majority of whom work at the Institute of Geography at the Pedagogical University of Cracow, have presented the outcomes of their research during a Regional Conference of International Geographical Union which took place in Krakow, August 21–28, 2015. The current publication presents the following issues: flash floods, geography of cities, migration, geography of tourism, the use of modern technology in information management, as well as the position of geography in education at a university level, multicultural education and the role of geography textbooks in forming students' competencies.

Małgorzata Bajgier-Kowalska studied the problem of spa and wellness tourist offers. Based on the example of Krynica-Zdrój, she presented the current condition and tendencies for future development of said form of tourism in a health-resort environment. Through opinion polls she presented similarities and differences between commercial spa and wellness resorts and those emerging as parts of existing sanatoriums in Krynica.

Tomasz Bryndal presented the results of empirical study on the occurrence of flash floods in the Carpathians caused by heavy rain. The data gathered prove that western and southern regions of the Carpathians are more prone to flash floods than other regions. However, when administrative units were taken into account, the problem was more diverse in terms of spatial distribution. Two measures were used to identify said units: the share of a given catchment in the region/commune, and the vulnerability to flash flood occurrence.

Monika Gołąb-Korzeniowska discussed the impact of policy of spatial development on relations of city-rural communes based on the example of Małopolska province. The author focuses on the issues connected with spatial planning in said areas which reflects the policy of local authorities in relation to directions of their development in terms of spatial management.

Grzegorz J. Koziński and Mateusz Skrzatek studied the problem of using modern technology in information management. They presented the notion of building Spatial Information System (SIS) for managing public registers and presenting spatial data through an internal geoportal of institutions of a given local government, as seen on the example of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian Voivodeship.

Marcelin Makowski chose Bielsko's Old Town to visualize the impact of revitalization on social and economic development of a city. In his article, he presented infrastructural, social, and economic changes resulting from the renovation of the old city centre and their influence on the development of the services sector.

Moreover, he also pointed to social problems connected with modernization of the area in question.

Monika Panecka-Niepsuj analyzed the problem of spatial diversification of medium-sized Polish cities. The author approached the notion from the perspective of volume of commuting to work. The study is based on measures for shuttle migrations: indices of departures, arrivals, the balance of flows and the quotient factor.

Anna Płoskoń uses Borne Sulinowo to present the influence of political system change on socio-economic and demographic processes occurring in Poland. She studied the socio-demographic changes of the last twenty years in Borne Sulinowo (formerly a closed city) after the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Marcin Popiel discussed in his article social and organizational aspects of tourism availability for the disabled. He identified and described the barriers limiting the development of tourist offer for said target group. Furthermore, he highlights the importance of tourism in rehabilitation process.

Piotr Raźniak, in his article analyzes social-economic factors and their influence on migration in Poland. In his research the author took into consideration the following factors: the average investment in enterprises in PLN per capita, the average number of newly registered business entities per 1,000 inhabitants, a percentage growth in the number of apartments, a monthly gross salary against the national average salary, and the average unemployment rate.

Małgorzata Szelińska-Kukulak and Józef Kukulak discuss the characteristics of higher education in Portugal, with particular emphasis on geographical and geological education. The article was based mainly on data collected from educational institutions during the ERASMUS program and statistics from the years 2010–2014. Geography is taught only at universities, including the one in Lisbon and the oldest one in Coimbra. Studies in geology are offered by a slightly higher number of institutions.

Agnieszka Świątek and Bożena Wójtowicz took upon themselves to analyze the problem of education among the Roma ethnic minority in Poland. The authors focus on innovative solutions in developing teachers' competencies that enable successful teaching of Romani children, which is the only means of fighting social exclusion of said minority.

Mariola Tracz and Jolanta Rodzoś studied the role of contemporary geography textbooks in developing students' competencies. They analyzed 7 out of the total 11 textbooks approved by the Ministry of National Education. The article describes in detail the functions of a given textbooks, including the types of exercises used and proposed didactic innovations.

Ljubomyr Tsaryk, Andriy Kuzyshyn, Petro Tsaryk, Nadiia Stetsko, Yaroslav Marunyak, Inna Poplavska and Mariana Hinzula from the National Pedagogical University of Ternopil, Ukraine presented the development of recreational areas as a concept of a system of interlinked areas of high environmental and recreational values. On the basis of five regions they identified and described the development and functioning of recreational areas based on existing forms of environmental protection (national parks, landscape parks).

The volume is concluded with an article by Witold Warcholik on segmentation of tourist product buyers in the Luboń Wielki area in light of creating a market for

tourist services in Beskid Wyspowy. The profile of a tourist was created based on the monitoring of tourist traffic and conducted surveys, including those on the perception of given mountain range.

We hope that the broad spectrum of the articles included in the present volume of *Annales Paedagogicae Cracoviensis Studia Geographica* will constitute an interesting read and will inspire further reflection and research.

*Mariola Tracz, Bożena Wójtowicz*