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Report from the Seventh Annual International Conference

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach
dozwolonego użytku.

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On 28 and 29 May 2012, the seventh international conference organized by the World Economy Research Institute of the Warsaw School of Economics was held in Warsaw. The main topic of the conference was: **“Innovation and Education: Drivers of National and Regional Competitiveness in the 21st century”**. The conference was held under the honorary patronage of the Minister of Economics. In addition, several media partners were engaged to promote the conference, including economic journal *Gazeta Bankowa*, the e-portal of the editor, *Nowy Przemysł*, and Portal Innowacji.

The main goal of the conference was to stimulate discussion between international researchers conducting empirical and theoretical analysis in the area of education, innovation and competitiveness of firms, countries and regions. In addition, the conference focused on economic policy implications of the recent research. The main research areas of the conference were as follows:

- The issues of innovation systems at the macro and micro level and their role in the process of building the competitive advantage of countries, regions and enterprises;
- Education policies and their impact on human capital development, and the innovation potential of countries or enterprises;
- Research on innovation and education issues as well as recommendations for Polish economic policy.

Several scientific papers were submitted for conference-related topics. The conference speakers represented research centers from 10 countries: Poland, Hungary, Austria, the United States, Romania, Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Kazakhstan and Belarus. The first day of the conference focused on “Achieving Competitiveness through Education”. The conference was opened by the former Dean of the Collegium of the World Economy, Prof. dr hab. Jolanta Mazur. The topic of the first session was: “Economic Convergence and Competitive Position: Poland in the EU” and included the presentation of the recently published book “POLAND Competitiveness Report 2012: Focus on Education”. This report presented an analysis of Poland’s competitive position in

2011 compared with other EU countries and especially with the main Polish trading partners. The comparative analyzes of the report included both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. In addition, options for possible development of the Polish economy were discussed and economic priorities were presented to improve competitiveness and achieve a better-endowed society.

The second session of the first conference day focused on sharing best practices: "How to Speed up Innovations and Improve the Competitive Position of Firms, Regions and Countries?". Speakers from Hungary, Austria, the United States and Poland contributed to this session. The third session of the conference was conducted as a panel discussion on the topic: "Building Skills for Innovation and Competitiveness in the 21st Century". Representatives from the government sector, such as the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Education, as well as representatives of the business sector took part in this panel debate. The first day of the conference finished with a session on: "Science and Education in the Knowledge Economy". This conference stream focused on issues related to entrepreneurship and education and their influence on innovation and competitiveness.

The second day of the conference concentrated on "Innovation, Human Capital and Competitiveness". The discussion was opened by Prof. dr. hab. Marzenna A. Weresa, the Director of the World Economy Research Institute, who presented the results of a research project on "Human Capital, Innovation and Long-Term Trade Competitiveness: Implications for Poland" financed by the National Science Center. The main goal of this project is to broaden the knowledge on economic growth and competitiveness factors, including the influence of innovation and human capital on building competitive advantages in international trade.

The next session of the second conference day provided a chance for exchanging ideas on "Innovation Systems and Competitiveness in the World Economy". In this debate, researchers participated from Germany, Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Kazakhstan. The last session of the conference was dedicated to reflections and observations on human capital development and competitive position of companies, regions and countries in times of economic downturn.

In addition to the exchange of knowledge and research outcomes, the conference enabled discussions and opened the possibility for setting up research relations with experts from many international scientific centers specializing in competitiveness, education and innovation issues.

The best papers of the conference will be published in the series: "Papers and Materials of the World Economy Research Institute available for download free of charge at: <http://www.sgh.waw.pl/instytut/igs/publikacje/atompag.2012-04-27.0745569481/>.