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PhD thesis summary

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The local growth in the borderlands with a particular consideration of its endogenous potential shown by the example of Prudnik county.

There are still places that could be called marginal areas in the age of unifying Europe. Their marginal position is especially reflected in space, economy and society. In these areas unfavourable features cumulate and create specific factors that influence socio-economic development, growth disparity, identity and dependence. The author's aim is to determine reasons for the low endogenous potential in the borderlands as well as ways of raising potential growth with a consideration of human capital. Author's interests concentrate on Opolskie voivodeship, especially Prudnik county, due to the fact that these areas experience an economic slump in comparison with neighbouring areas of Upper and Lower Silesia. The researched area has been in the sphere of author's professional interests for 25 years. In his opinion the attempt to find solutions for the region could result in stimulating the regional growth as well as local businessmen representing the main source of endogenous potential in the county.

The research problem is the analysis of ways, possibilities and effectiveness of local growth stimulation in the borderland with a particular consideration of its endogenous potential. Adopting active enterprising attitude by local communities plays crucial role in the process.

Taking the research problem into account the main research aim is: *The assessment of the endogenous potential in the borderland and indication of its specific conditions for socio-economic growth influenced by change in strategic priorities and local community active conduct.* In the dissertation a deductive approach has been used which concludes from general phenomena and acknowledged facts about parts and elements of the subject. There has also

been used an inductive approach that measures relations of results obtained by interviews, surveys and conclusions. Two auxiliary aims have been formulated: research and application. The research goal has been realized by gaining and systematizing knowledge while the application aim refers to conducted empirical research and the indication of practical recommendations as well as examples of beneficial practice for the local development.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. In the introduction the research subject, problem, aim as well as research questions and methods have been determined. In the first chapter basic terms concerning local growth have been discussed. The regional development at the local, domestic and European level has been presented. In the second chapter the importance of the borderland has been explained pointing at how socio-economic processes are created in such areas. The third chapter considers the principles of European Union politics with a reference to the borderlands. In author's opinion, the implementation of suggested solutions could result in the researched area stimulation and elimination of its marginal position. The last chapter characterizes socio-economic processes appearing in Prudnik county with a particular focus on its endogenous resources. In the conclusion the author summarizes analysed problems and indicates areas of potential further exploration of the research subject.

Key words: peripheral areas, border areas, endogenous resources, human capital, social capital, development strategy, district, county.