

Introduction

Papers presented in this publication refer to basic issues of social-economic studies conducted in the Geography Institute of the Pedagogical University in Cracow, in Economic Geography Department and Regional Geography Department. Within the statutory work they concentrate on investigating the dynamics of changes and modern correlation of industrialization and urbanization on the Southern Poland area, on the processes of spatial structures transformation connected with the changes in economy system and spatial-economic structures in the second half of 20th century in selected Poland and world regions. Much space is also devoted to geography teaching methods on the academic level.

The contents of this volume result from recent studies of our staff. The first group of papers comprises the analysis of selected aspects of regional structures occurring in the years of economy system transformations. They concern: urban settlement system changes of southern Poland during social-economic transition period (J. Rajman), the level and dynamics of aging process in Cracow voivodship in the years 1988-1996 in the light of selected demographic features (Z. Długosz, T. Rachwał), the changes of agricultural economic base in small towns of Cracow region (A. Kwiatek-Sołtys) and main tendencies of changes in individual agriculture of Skierniewice voivodship in the years 1988-1996 (S. Kłosowicz).

The second group of articles refers to social-economic issues in selected countries and covers the analysis of forced internal migrations in Russia in the last half-century (Z. Szot), presentation of the role of private agriculture sector in Ukraine (R. Rettinger), transformations in the intensity level of European Union agriculture (R. Uliszak) and the process of demographic changes in India (S. Kurek).

The volume ends with the article in the range of economical geography teaching methods on the academic level, in which its modern problems in regional fieldwork are presented (M. Troc).

The present volume is published to commemorate our untimely died Colleague – dr Alicja Krakowska (M. Troc).

Zbigniew Ziolo

Translated by *S. Kurek*