

PROSPECTS FOR POLAND'S SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONDITIONS OF NEW GLOBALIZATION AND INDUSTRY 5.0

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Purpose: The article aims to assess the possibilities of Poland's future development in rapidly changing external conditions. Particular emphasis was placed on global economic problems.

Design/methodology/approach: The research is based on a critical analysis of the available literature on ongoing global economic changes and future studies.

Findings: The literature review concludes that the dynamics of the changes and uncertainty are growing. In addition to existing and well-identified threats, such as the growing risk of global conflict, migration, or increasing competition and tension in international relations, new challenges are being observed. They are related to the development of information and communication technologies, especially artificial intelligence, which permanently change interpersonal relations and communication methods.

Originality/value: Current and new development concepts, such as sustainable development and economy 5.0, mean that strategic concepts of the country's development should consider a new set of factors determining the effectiveness of economic development in the long term.

Keywords: new globalization, climate change, economy 5.0, sustainable development, Poland.

Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

The work is theoretical and empirical. It concerns the scope, role, and mutual relations of challenges, factors, and barriers to the sustainable socio-economic development of Poland in the conditions of the changing nature of globalization and threats of the 21st century. These include rapidly progressing, catastrophic changes in the Earth's climate and environmental degradation, mainly due to irresponsible human activity. The first half of this century will bring further quantitative and structural demographic changes, growing migrations and wanderings of peoples, regrouping of the positions of superpowers and regional powers

and their competition, including military, for economic supremacy and political hegemony on land, oceans, continental shelves, and international straits, in the Arctic and Antarctica, in cyberspace, the Internet, and in space. Many countries and regions of the world are witnessing the degradation of democracy and the intensification of authoritarian, nationalist, and neo-imperialist tendencies.

Along with climate cataclysms and the accumulating effects of global warming, geostrategic and resource conflicts (the fight for access to drinking water, arable land, food, energy sources, and rare earth raw materials, etc.) as well as economic, financial, and social conflicts are growing, accompanied by movement of people from least developed countries and countries affected by natural disasters and war to richer and safer countries in the world. Rapid climate change and the mechanisms of power struggle are nothing new in human history. However, the growing population and the possibilities of modern technologies may threaten human life and the Earth's biosphere (Popkiewicz, Karda, Malinowski, 2018; *Climate Change...*, 2020; *Green Finance*, 2023).

2. Methods

The primary method used in the work was a critical analysis of the literature on economic development strategies, economic changes, and future studies. The study used texts written in Poland and abroad. That is due to the nature of the work, i.e., analysis of external conditions that relate to the future development of Poland. Both books and scientific articles from recognized databases of scientific articles were used.

The inference was made using the inductive method, which allowed for general conclusions to be made based on the collected information.

The described economic changes have been confirmed by appropriate statistical data. For this purpose, information from international databases, including the World Bank, OECD, UNCTAD, and UNDP, was used.

3. Results

The global financial crisis in the first decade of the 21st century ended the era of dynamic development of globalization and international trade processes, supported by the United States and international economic organizations of the United Nations system, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the OECD, acting following the neoliberal principles of the Washington Consensus, meeting has faced growing social criticism, especially

since the global financial crisis of 2008-2009 and its repercussions in the following years. We adopt the definition of globalization used by the Council of Europe, also used in practice, as: "increasingly closer economic integration of all countries of the world resulting from liberalization and, as a consequence, an increase in both the volume and diversity of international trade in goods and services, a decrease in transport costs, a growing international intensity capital penetration, the enormous growth of the global labor force and the accelerated worldwide spread of technologies, in particular communications (Eurostat, 2017, p. 8).

After the global financial crisis in 2008 and 2009, globalization took on a new character. The primary beneficiaries and leaders of the "new globalization" have become China and other countries with emerging markets and developing economies, which in the second decade of the 21st century have become the largest producer of goods and services and the fastest growing, at a rate of 4.5-5% per year, segment of the global economy. At that time, developed (economically advanced) countries slowly regained the production level from before the global crisis, growing at a rate of less than 2.5%. The first twenty years of this century brought profound changes in the world's economic structure and regions, accompanied by shocks, threats, and crisis phenomena. As a result of structural changes in various areas and cross-sections - geographical, population, production and goods, technology, military, trade, and finance, a significant reconfiguration of the economic and geopolitical global scene took place compared to the state of the last decade of the 20th century (Kotyński, 2019).

Different challenges and areas of activity also characterize the new globalization. The ongoing changes in civilization mean that, in addition to the real economy and finances, activities in the virtual sphere, especially those related to the use of information, begin to play an increasingly important role. The initial rapid growth of the Internet and the businesses using this technology was slowed by the financial crisis, but this did not last long. The benefits that economies and countries achieve from better access to information often begin to determine economic success. For this reason, we are observing subsequent stages of the development of the virtual economy, of which the development of information and communication technologies (ICT), e.g., 5G, autonomous vehicles, and artificial intelligence, should be considered the most breakthrough. The scale of these phenomena is so large that we are increasingly discussing a new stage of human development - the information civilization. Dynamic development processes mean that activities in the sphere of ICT are subject to intense competition and even espionage activities, thus creating another level of distrust in global relations.

Donald Trump's presidency in the United States, with slogans of limiting imports and reversing the tendency to transfer (relocalize) the main phases of production from the USA to China and other rapidly developing countries with emerging economies, low labor costs, and growing competitiveness, also in the field of modern branches of production and services, resulted in the disruption of international value chains, leading to price increases and a collapse in the import of essential components and products to the markets of the USA, Europe and other highly developed countries. That concerned, for example, medicines, food, and semiconductors

necessary for the electronics industry and the development of advanced communication technologies. The decline of globalization and the rise of isolationism were deepened by the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the closing of economies, and the growing crisis in 2020. It also contributed to high inflation, which became visible during the recovery in 2021, stimulated by the loosening of economic policy, continued in many countries, including Poland, also in 2022-2023, after the intensification of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and the introduction of economic sanctions against Russia by the U.S. and NATO countries. Producers and transnational corporations have used them to raise food and energy prices. These events and threats to the security of supplies and the crisis of confidence in cooperation with distant countries initiated a new phase of globalization - its temporary regression, uncertainty, and segmentation within allied and geographically and/or politically close groups of countries (e.g., BRICS or ASEAN), concentrated around the USA and China - rival superpowers of the 21st century.

Based on the above considerations, the new globalization should be considered through the prism of three factors: the shift of the center of economic development to developing countries, mainly in Asia, the rapid growth of technologies based on the use of information, and the growing distrust and even regression in international relations, which leads to segmentation of cooperation between countries and economies. As a result, the new globalization still causes an increase in the internationalization of economies. Still, it is selective, i.e., it is increasingly directed not globally but at the development of specific interest groups and alliances.

Global challenges and changes taking place in the world are also noticed in the European Union, which is trying to reconcile the latest trends in economic development with counteracting threats resulting from the destruction of the natural environment. The most expressive manifestation of this is the currently applicable development strategy of the European Union, i.e., the European Green Deal (European Commission, 2019a). One of its basic assumptions is to create a modern, sustainable, resource-efficient, and competitive economy in the E.U. (European Commission, 2019b). This new economy should also be just and inclusive for all. The reform is based on three general assumptions: achieving zero net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050, economic growth decoupled from resource use, and no person and no place left behind.

Many specific strategies are intended to achieve these goals. One of them is Industry 5.0 (European Commission, 2021). It is a concept of economic development highlighting the critical role of changes in the industry. It recognizes that this sector can play a crucial role in providing solutions to reduce social problems, especially climate change. Industry 5.0 should be considered a development version of the earlier concept of Industry 4.0. The changes aim to increase the emphasis on sustainable development, human orientation and resilience in European industry. However, these three main components (Principal Components) of Industry 5.0 mentioned by the E.C. are not particularly new, e.g., in comparison to the definition of the

Emerald Economy, which is a condition for sustainable development, understood as a green economy linked to an innovative, democratic and pro-social economy. And purple, which also takes into account cultural and civilizational development factors. The concept and scheme of the emerald economy, with its attributes or pillars, are presented in the monograph (*Self Management...*, 2022), in chapter 2 (Kotyński, 2022a, p. 22).

The European Union defines Industry 5.0 as the key to achieving the future industrial economy. It is to be an economy focused on people and their needs, not production. At the same time, the new industry is to be as friendly to the natural environment and human health as possible (European Commission, 2022). That is changing the philosophy of the sector. That is not only about entering a new stage of development in which man will develop the economy and production based on the widespread use of information and adapting products to the needs of users but above all, Industry 5.0 is based on the recognition that man is an element of the natural environment and his actions must be consistent with the needs of nature and must not undermine the resilience of the environment. That means appropriate, effective use of available resources, reducing emissions of pollutants and waste, and caring for other species' well-being and survival conditions. The means to achieve this goal is to implement the assumptions of the circular economy concept to the greatest possible extent.

A manifestation of placing human development at the center of the Industry 5.0 concept is the recognition that the new economy, especially in the digital sphere, is to be the basis for creating a contemporary, modern society referred to in the literature as Society 5.0. However, unlike Industry 5.0, the concept of the new society does not come from the European Union but from Japan. It is assumed that Society 5.0 is no longer just an information society that commonly uses information resources available in the cloud but a society that uses the capabilities of artificial intelligence to identify critical data and even create proposals for solutions to many problems (Cabinet Office, 2023).

The creation, in two different parts of the world, of the mutually complementary concepts of Industry 5.0 and Society 5.0 and their broad approach has resulted in the idea of economy 5.0, combining these two concepts, being less frequently used in the literature. In practice, the Industry 5.0 concept goes significantly beyond industry problems and is more of an economy-wide concept. Its name indicates the essence of industry transformation to achieve new socio-economic goals.

4. Discussion

Nowadays, no country is able to develop without taking into account international conditions. That also applies to Poland, which, as a member of the European Union, must consider the changes taking place in its immediate and distant environment in its

development strategies. State development strategies, especially long-term ones, should be constructed in such a way as to flexibly respond not only to current but also future challenges, i.e., both opportunities and threats (Kleer, Prandecki, 2020). They should be the subject of thorough analysis, also on a global level, including results from membership in NATO - a global alliance.

As previously indicated, the new globalization is characterized by a shift in economic centers and an increase in distrust and tensions in the political sphere. Limiting or segmenting globalization (decoupling – Rodrik, Walt, 2022), caused by geopolitical and strategic considerations regarding economic and political security, generates costs that not all countries are willing to bear. In the case of NATO, this is visible in the actions of Hungary and Turkey, for which maintaining tensions related to the war in Ukraine is downright harmful. For Poland, however, economic and political cooperation with the USA and the Euro-Atlantic alliance, which increased its strength and numbers on the northeastern flank after the summit in Vilnius in July 2023, is critically important. Similarly, it is essential to improve and activate cooperation within the European Union and deepen economic and technological cooperation with democratic Asian countries, including the Republic of Korea, India, and Japan, while maintaining mutually beneficial relations with China. These are opportunities to strengthen Poland's security and resilience to threats to its sustainable development and modernization and strengthen its position in the global economy by supporting the energy transformation, increasing defense forces, and building a green economy. In Poland, threats to sustainable economic and social development resulting from global climate warming and the degradation of the natural environment and their effects are increasingly noticed and felt (*Science of Climate*, 2018), requiring participation in solidarity fight for the implementation of the decisions of the Paris UN Sustainable Development Summit of 2015 and agreements from subsequent years, as well as the creation and implementation of new development strategies and adaptation activities (Prandecki, 2023) to the future climatic situation - the beginning of a new era, threatening water scarcity, steppes of arable lands, migration of peoples and the influx of refugees to developed countries, exposed in their areas to lack water and food, as well as internal fights and armed conflicts, known from the history of humanity (Kotyński, 2019; Prandecki, 2022). These threats overlap with the harmful effects of expected demographic changes and slowdown in global development, including weakening the growth of gross global product - to approximately 2% in 2060 and convergence at this level of annual GDP changes in developed and developing countries, according to forecasts (OECD, 2018), today considered too optimistic.

On the other hand, the world is facing the prospect of breakthrough technological changes, progress in the digital economy (UNCTAD, 2019), and innovations, carrying potential development opportunities but also various types of risks that threaten the survival of humanity and the Earth's ecosystem. In the OECD's "positive" scenario (2018), the situation of developing and developed countries could be improved by maintaining free trade and carrying out deep

institutional and social reforms with the participation of the state, e.g., in the field of pension systems, supporting health and family protection, education policy and labor market, which would also help maintain the balance and security of public finances. Pandemic threats growing with globalization, and especially the outbreak of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, have made citizens and governments aware of the need to give special priority to investments in social development (human development) related to the increase in expenditure on modern education, labor market development, health, and family protection. The World Bank report on world development, devoted to the new nature of work, showed how important a factor in maintaining sustainable economic and social development in the future are investments in human capital, especially in education and health care, as well as changes like human work. The Human Development Index was presented there, which measures the consequences of failure to invest in human capital resulting from the loss of productivity of the next generation of employees. The analyses suggest that in countries with the lowest investments in human capital, the labor force in the future will be only one-third or half as productive as it could be if the population of these countries enjoyed total health and received a full-fledged education (UNDP, 2019).

In the emerging era of new globalization and Industry 5.0, one of the conditions for maintaining sustainable development will be the flexible adaptation of countries and enterprises to the requirements of an innovative, pro-ecological, and pro-social economy, new forms of digitization and communication and the development of intelligent software (A.I. artificial intelligence), evolving with changes in clients' requirements. The role of education and social development (human development), necessary to meet new quality challenges in the national and global labor market and global competition, should increase. Operating in conditions of rapid climate, demographic, geopolitical, and social changes will require governments, entrepreneurs, and societies to have strategic thinking skills, adaptive capacity, and resistance to risk (resilience or antifragility: Taleb, 2012). On the other hand, current and future generations will be beneficiaries but also possible victims of the next wave of innovation and progress of Industry 5.0 in the field of technology, biotechnology, communication, and finance, as well as the growing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in many areas, including the military and safety.

Rapid changes in the geographical and political structure of production and population of the world, characterized by the growth of the position of China, India, and other countries in East and South Asia and the Pacific region in the first decades of the 21st century, including the years of economic and financial crises and pandemics, were accompanied by changes in the nature and the structure of globalization and the processes of international, regional integration - their institutional forms, configurations, structures, and leaders. We live in times of intensifying competition between the superpowers of this century - the United States of America and China, but also in a period of dynamic reshuffles on the geopolitical map of the world, resulting from the rapid growth of population and the power of regional, emerging

powers on various continents, as well as the loss of leading positions by some highly developed countries with market economies and former empires of the 19th and 20th centuries. Among contemporary powers, we can distinguish those that are faithful to the principles of liberal democracy and respect for human rights, and their power is of a defensive nature, related to participation or leadership in a democratic system of collective security, such as NATO, unlike authoritarian states whose neo-imperialism is of a nature expansionist, combined with the pursuit of global or regional hegemony, threatening the stability of the system of balance of power and international security (Kotyński, 2022b). In Europe, after three decades of complex transformation and the emergence of new powers on the world stage, in most democratic countries, the neoliberal economic paradigm of the Washington Consensus has given way to various varieties of the social market economy (Mączyńska, Pysz, 2020; Mączyńska, 2021) - declared, but to varying degrees implemented in practice. Such provisions are also included in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of April 2, 1997. Soft power measures are still crucial for the position of individual countries in international relations but insufficient to ensure the security of respective peripheral, smaller countries (Nye, 2009), such as Poland and most European Union countries. Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, located on NATO's eastern flank, are particularly vulnerable to provocations, cyberattacks, the use of economic pressure tools, and other forms of hybrid warfare used by authoritarian neighbors seeking to weaken the unity and solidarity of EU and NATO countries. The European Union has a unique role to play for the political, economic, and social security of European countries as well as their reconstruction after the collapse caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and global turbulence, as it is implementing the most extensive package of measures in history to revitalize the European economy - the Recovery Plan for Europe - an economic reconstruction instrument worth over EUR 800 billion. The EU could play the role of collective power and an essential actor on the contemporary international scene while maintaining the sovereignty of member states. However, this would require overcoming the centrifugal, authoritarian, and nationalist tendencies, which are intensifying especially after Brexit, contrary to the principles of the rule of law and democracy, judicial independence, equality of citizens, freedom of association, organization of meetings, and freedom of the media, which have been present in some countries for several years in European Union, including Poland (Wilkin, 2017). Such conduct was inconsistent with the Treaties and fundamental principles of the Union, weakening its strength and integrity in a time of growing risk and global challenges while threatening the economic and social development and security of Member States. The resulting financial penalties and the threat of loss or delay in the inflow of E.U. funds increasingly burdened Polish citizens and were compensated by increasing taxes and an automatic "inflation tax", affecting the administration's representatives and supporters of the ruling right-wing conservative parties to the slightest extent. Poland's groundbreaking return to the path of democratic development and the rule of law, as well as deepening political, economic, and financial ties with other European Union countries, occurred as a result of the victory in the parliamentary elections achieved by

the democratic "October 15 Coalition" and the election of Donald Tusk as Chairman of the Council of Ministers in December 2023.

These events were generally consistent with the scenario of countries returning or entering the path of democratization, presented in the book by a professor of political science and international relations at George Washington University (Miller, 2021). This author used the most extensive qualitative and quantitative analyses of the democratization process, presenting "a new theory of democratization that focuses on how events such as coups, wars, and elections challenge autocratic regimes and trigger democratic change". Miller showed that since 1800, over 90% of democratic transitions have occurred in one of two ways: "countries democratize after a major violent shock or democratize through elections and regain power in a democracy".

5. Summary

The takeover of power in Poland by the democratic coalition at the threshold of 2024 took place in challenging external, internal, political, and social conditions, requiring overcoming the accumulated neglect and inequalities in meeting the material and health needs of the population after several years of inflation and increasing public debt. There is a need to quickly implement the necessary, costly reforms in many areas of state management and economic development towards a modern, green economy 5.0, using support from European Union funds. Fundamental and expensive are the investment needs and expenses necessary to strengthen the state's defense, to which at least 2% of GDP is to be allocated. That is required by the international situation, including the uncertain results of the U.S. presidential elections in the fall of 2024, and especially the devastating war ongoing in Ukraine, which threatens Poland as a result of Russia's criminal aggression in this country (Budzisz, 2023).

In such dynamically changing conditions, building development strategies should be based on analyzing the broadest possible spectrum of challenges, interpreted in the long term. Not only the previously noticed threats should be taken into account, but especially new ones for which there are no developed procedures. State institutions should prepare for them in advance, assuming that problems of this type will grow and not solve themselves. For this reason, in addition to the rapidly changing military security conditions, it is also necessary to consider the activities undertaken in the information space. In practice, most countries do not have tools to counteract widespread hate speech or fake news on the Internet. Typically, these types of threats are individual, but in the future, they may evolve even to a scale that threatens the state's existence.

The country's sustainable development should be holistic in nature, and development strategies should be aimed at maximizing profit and taking into account the needs of humans and the environment. That means that in the coming decades, we can expect rapid economic changes comparable to the 5.0 revolution, which will affect industry and the general perception of the economy and development.

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