

FOREWORD

Structural policy of the EU is aimed at the cohesion and modernization of the economies, supports sustainable development through investments in the area of infrastructure and human capital. Structural funds of the EU are transferred to different regions or sectors of an economy which without this financial support would not be able to reach an average economic level of the EU.

This publication presents the results of investigations conducted in the scope of the European Union integration. These were carried out by scholars from Poland, the United States of America and the Czech Republic. The results of different research projects were presented during the 7th International Conference "Economic problems of the European integration. Methodological and comparative aspects", which took place in Lodz on the 4th and 5th of June 2007. The Conference was organized by the Department of Economic and Social Statistics, University of Lodz.

Papers discussed during the conference were adjusted according to the remarks and comments before the final publishing. Due to variety of aspects undertaken by participants in their written works publication of two separate monographs was possible. The first publication entitled *Macroeconomic and Regional Aspects of the European Integration* contains papers that concern macroeconomic and regional aspects of the European integration.

The second part which is subject of this journal is divided into two chapters:

Chapter I. European integration versus economic development – sectoral approaches,

Chapter II. Social aspects of the European integration.

Prepared publications are contribution to the research about the European integration and forcibly show the multidimensionality of its implication, especially for countries from Central and Eastern Europe. Problems and remarks presented in this publication should be useful not only to increase readers' knowledge about the European Union and consequences of its enlargement but also can be an inspiration for further investigations on economic and social aspects of the European integration. The European integration is a long-lasting process, dynamic phenomenon and should be subject of investigations for further years.