

**„Around dilemmas of creating
innovative climate in a traditional
industrial region - conditionings of
Silesia’s development.”**

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REGIONAL RESPONSES AND GLOBAL SHIFTS: ACTORS, INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS¹

Presentation order

- Theoretical introduction - arms of the Silesian anchor
- Towards learning region - conclusions from research done in 2009 in Silesian province
- Key words: innovation, pro-innovation climate, creative class, learning region and organisations, innovational activity, nets of institutions.

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Innovation as *genius loci* of the region

- Impact of innovation on social life
- Aspects of regional culture vs. innovation
- *Learning Region* - Richard Florida,
- The role of universities and research & development units - Daniel Bell, Richard Florida
- *Creative class* – scientists, engineers, architects and designers, writers, artists, musicians and other freelancers, etc.
- *Institutional density* (Asheim) – complex structure of cooperating institutes including authorities on various levels as well as the economic, cultural and social circles

Regional anchor

– pro-innovative climate considerations

- Anchor – strong establishment or slow-down?
- Building on solid values or this value could be the reason for the slow-down?
- Development or slow-down? - the result of improper events and over-restrictive compliance with the ruling norms?

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Silesian anchor syndrome

- A complex of occurrences which today do not find external occurrences supporting a process of establishing a strong basis for making an advantage over other European regions
- Concurrently considerations of the region's pro-innovative climate

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Arms of the Silesian anchor

1. Historical considerations,
2. Multiculturalism of the region,
3. Economic monoculture,
4. Current political considerations,
5. Mentality of the inhabitants and the quality of life.

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Effects of pro-innovative approach

- Institutional aspects of changes connected with new organisational forms emerging to support entrepreneurship and innovation
- Organisational aspects of changes occurring among enterprises - attempts to create learning organisations in enterprises
- Aspects of changing the social awareness in relation to work and family - evolution of the role of women in traditional Silesian family - successful women and wives of coal miners

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Main conclusion from research done in 2009 in silesian province

- The main questions of this research:
 - Relations and opinions of the experts and regional entrepreneurs on creating the basis of the learning region, also in relation to the Czech part of Silesia.
 - Transition from the industrial epoch to the post- industrial knowledge epoch.

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Examined respondents.

- 75 of the entrepreneurs from branches such as mining, metallurgical, metal, energy, electrical, chemical, and other connected services.
- 47 experts- mainly the presidents of the cities, the leaders of economic departments, research institutes, high schools, research-technology parks and clusters.
- 122 people all told.

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The ideas presented in the interviews with the experts - regional leaders and with the entrepreneurs.

1. The careers of interviewed people.
2. Changes into the learning region.
3. The activities of the respondents – relations with all actors of the region
4. The assessment of the actions of the entrepreneurs - changes during the last 10 years.
5. The influence of the Silesian culture on the development of the companies.
6. The evaluation of the future of Silesia as an industrial region changing into the learning one.

The assignment of the changes – from the industrial epoch to the epoch of knowledge.

- Entrepreneurs - categories of answers.
 - noticeable changes into the knowledge based economy (also with the industrial features)
 - noticeable changes into innovation (research cooperation, personal laboratories, responsibility for the region)
 - the epoch of knowledge associated mainly with the computerization of the company
 - lack of noticeable changes.

The assignment of the changes from the industrial epoch to the epoch of knowledge.

- Regional experts.
 - the market wrings on the companies development of knowledge and technologies
 - traditional companies have mainly computer infrastructure
 - some companies from different (mental and financial) reasons treats changes cautiously
 - some companies cannot identify with the new conditions and do not take care about knowledge and capital of the employers.

Changes into the learning organization.

- Entrepreneurs - categories of answers.
 - visible differences before and after the economic transformation- economical and political freedom
 - changes into the modern management - the greater autonomy of the workers, better investments in the employers,
 - Old-capitalistic view of management - only benefit and free market principles matter.

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Innovational activity of the companies.

- Entrepreneurs- categories of answers.
 - 14 of companies mentioned use innovational solutions and take care of patents
 - innovations as a process of improvement and adapting in new standards
 - lack of innovations but modern supply base – they care about the economic position of the firm.

Innovational activity of the companies.

- Experts - categories of answers.
 - Yes, there are innovational solutions in the region.
 - There are no innovational solutions.
 - Innovations develop gradually and are connected with the peculiarity of the region.

A dialogue between companies and regional governments.

- Entrepreneurs- categories of answers.
 - lack of cooperation or initiatives for the local idea
 - necessary cooperation with the president or mayor
 - charity and social matters (sport, health, culture)
 - taking part in the economy self - government (through the unions of employees).
- Experts - categories of answers.
 - local government favor companies on different occasions, connected for instance with various initiatives related usually with the environment or money for the new investments, also innovative.
 - The dialogue goes according to the law.

Towards the learning region- the assessment of the region's potential.

- Entrepreneurs - categories of answers.

- a huge potential of the region- an optimistic version
- development into innovations in the heavy industry
- development based on the regional culture values
- development based on human resources and higher education
- development with some obstacles, pointing to some of them.

- Experts - categories of answers.

- development signaling many advantages of the region
- development towards the innovations in the heavy industry
- development based on regional cultural values, additionally on tourism and environment protection
- development concentrated on human resources and higher education.

The assessment of the chances of creating the learning region (Wroclaw-Katowice-Ostrawa-Kraków)

- Experts- the most frequent answers.
 - many obstacles in the road to generate such a region (administration, policy, competition of sub- regions)
 - abilities of creating such a region (research centres, industry, economic potential, infrastructure).
- Entrepreneurs - the most frequent answers.
 - such a region already exists or will be created
 - pointing on many activities leading to this process (cooperation, investments, competition).

Resume – main conclusions

- Learning region - **from typical forms of enclave, to more and more wider hugging net of institution** acting in supporting the innovation climate.
- **Pionier transformation on many levels of social life** - leading in direction creating innovative climate.
- The lack of **stable support for building the bases of *learnig region*** - integration of province in innovative climate and building trust on regional level is the necessity.
- Men are **the largest capital of region**
- **Mainly external factors** – they cause the region is **still between five the most important regions in Poland.**

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Thank you!

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