

Introduction

The ongoing economic crisis alters the conditions and possibilities of developing business enterprises in individual countries, as well as local and regional groups. It concerns, in varying degrees, businesses, economic sectors, institutions and areas of social life. The crisis negatively affects production and services, limits the possibilities of adequate functioning of institutions, and causes the level and quality of life of various social groups to deteriorate. Limiting the economic activity leads also to lesser funding for state institutions, a decrease in size of the labour market, as well as a reduction of household budgets. This results in limiting market absorption of certain products and services, which, in turn, weakens financial institutions with regard to granting both consumer and investment loans, which ultimately affects all potential borrowers. It should also be added that the modern crisis is met with varying opinions in the field of economy. Some think of it as the final stage of an economic cycle, which is to be followed by a period of economic development, while others predict that the current crisis will last longer, or that it will give birth to a new economic downturn. This uncertainty prevents domestic enterprises with substantial financial means from developing their investment activities. Similarly, the general society, in possession of substantial assets, is not exhibiting signs of market activity either. Authors of the articles presented in the following, ninth volume of „Przedsiębiorczość – Edukacja” [Entrepreneurship – Education], comment on this very current topic.

The introductory article presents a model concept of conditions for developing entrepreneurship in an economic crisis, with special attention given to changes of the position of a business within the structure of the market economy, as well as the influence of the crisis on the economy in general. Theoretical considerations are illustrated with numerous empirical examples, presenting the influence of the crisis on selected areas of the Polish economy, as well as the economies of other, selected countries (Z. Ziolo). In the next article, an economic analysis of the effects of the crisis is conducted from the perspective of the teachings of the Catholic Church, including the position of moral order in business (M. Borowiec). The author of the following text shows that existing legal instruments are a significant detriment to business activity. They have undergone frequent changes in recent years, connected also with the tax system, which does not motivate businesses to develop their economic activity (P. Mężykowski). Consistent legal regulations, especially regarding the system of tax reliefs, are especially significant for maintaining and developing enterprises (P.M. Woroniecki). Furthermore, public institutions, as well as educational activities, conducted in the form of various types of training courses, also play a major role in creating conditions beneficial to developing entrepreneurship (S. Dorocki, A. Świętek). Finally, the influence of financial institutions on businesses, most importantly in the areas of overdraft, credit account, and investment credit, cannot be ignored (W. Sadowski).

A further group of articles presents the way in which the crisis is altering the functioning of businesses, institutions and entire sectors of the economy. The presented analyses concern: organizational activities of micro-enterprises (D. Janczewska), subjects of social economy (S. Sanetra-Półgrabi), possibilities of developing the tourism sector (S. Dorocki, P. Brzegowy; K. Ziółkowska-Weiss), and agrotourism farms (S. Dorocki, A.I. Szymańska, M. Zdon-Korzeniowska), as well as automotive services (M. Włodarczyk, J. Janczewski). The economic crisis creates functional changes in urban areas, and revitalizes them (J. Gałka, N. Grad), introduces technological changes in the area of construction (M. Płaziak), and alters investment priorities in the defence industry (P.L. Wilczyński).

Educational activities, aimed at training managers, skilled not only in conducting business in the conditions of crisis, but also during future processes of progressing economic development, constitute the third area of research, important from the point of view of the authors. The above is exemplified by considerations on new directions of education, including entrepreneurship education (K. Wach; T.T. Brzozowski), and by a presentation of opinions of social partners, concerning the directions of forming personal and social competences, important from the point of view of the retail sector (S. Kurek, T. Rachwał, W. Kilar), as well as the possibilities of creating cluster initiatives in the career guidance system (A. Pradela). The volume finishes with an analysis of fields of study in higher education, in relation to the labour market, and propositions of certain changes in this area (D. Piróg).

By presenting the following volume to our readers, we are hoping that the articles contained therein, describing the development of businesses in the conditions of crisis, will help to widen and expand this subject area, in both school, and university education. These articles underline significant complexity of the discussed topic, and cover a wide research area, which should be broadened and expanded in the course of further studies. This is significant not only from the point of view of limiting the current, negative impact of the economic crisis, but may also serve to enhance the social, economic and cultural development in coming years, as well as accelerate processes of forming an information society. And so, everyone interested in the topics covered in the following volume is invited to join us. We are open to constructive criticism, and propositions of new research directions.

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