

EDITORIAL

The current volume of *Europa XXI*, the 20th already, is dedicated to the issue of, broadly understood, borders and border-adjacent areas. As far as the Central-East Europe is concerned, that subject matter has been one of the most frequent objects for spatial analyses since 1989. After that year, the studies concentrated, in the main, on the question how to improve the borders' permeability (especially as regards those formerly located behind the "Iron Curtain") as well as on the problems concerning the development of transborder cooperation. Until the year 2003 this development seemed to be only a one-way process. Later, however, the accession of Central European countries into the European Union and establishing the Schengen Zone led to peculiar dichotomy in this respect. Functions of the EU internal borders were subject to further reduction, whereas its external borders saw a re-introduction of a tight border regime, regress in permeability of borders and an undermining of the local economic ties. These processes as well as a diversified situation being developed on the particular border sections have not been yet fully described in the literature. The present volume is an attempt to bridge that gap in knowledge.

The first part of the present volume is devoted to the Polish section of the EU eastern border and the Schengen Zone. It includes the papers discussing the results of the research project financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (carried out by the Institute of Geography and Spatial Organization PAS) titled: *Flows of persons and goods across the Polish segment of the outer boundary of the European Union - spatial analysis* (papers by Komornicki, T., Wisniewski, R., and Szejgiec, B.). The same part contains also the articles dealing with the particular segments of the Polish eastern border that were prepared by Polish experts (Palmowski, T., Miszczuk, A.) as well as by representatives of Belarus (Artemenko, S.) and Ukrainian institutions (Pysarenko, S. and Naslidnyk, I.). These are complemented by the paper written by Więckowski, M. concerning the capabilities of development for tourism in the borderland of East Poland.

The second part of the present volume contains the papers illustrating the selected problems relating to transborder cooperation that occur on the "new" inner boundaries of the European Union. These articles discuss the experiences that come from the Polish-German (Tölle, A. as well as Dołzbłasz S. and Raczyk, A.), Czech-German-Polish (Mathey, J. and Stutzriemer, S.) as well as Slovak-Polish borders.

Editorial Team