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## The 3<sup>rd</sup> Szczecin Innovations Management Conference 2017

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On 23 and 24 November 2017, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Innovations Management Conference (*Zarządzanie Innowacjami w Gospodarce*) was held in Szczecin. This year, the conference was focused on the issues of creativity, cooperation and perspectives of innovation management. The event was organised by the Department of Enterprise Management, the Faculty of Economics and Management, the University of Szczecin. The aim of the conference was to establish the forum for discussions on innovation management processes in the competitive, global economy. The aspects of innovation management are the core research topics cultivated by the team of the Department of Enterprise Management (cf. Wiśniewska, 2010; Janasz, Janasz, Koziół and Szopik-Depczyńska, 2010; Wiśniewska and Janasz, 2014). Similarly to previous editions, the scope of the conference encompassed the following aspects (cf. Kazojć and Lis, 2016, p. 108):

- “manufacturing and service innovations;
- strategic management of innovations;
- financing innovations;

- the role of innovations and quality in managing business organisations;
- social innovations;
- frugal innovations;
- nation- and EU-level innovation-oriented policies;
- transfer of technologies;
- clusters and innovation-oriented networks;
- internationalisation of innovation management”.

The agenda of the conference included one general paper session and panel discussion focused on the contemporary challenges of managing innovations, three discussion panels oriented to leading topics of the conference i.e. creativity, cooperation and perspectives of innovation management and two debates devoted to business practice experiences in managing innovations.

The general paper session and panel discussion entitled “*Quo vadis innovatio?*” focused on the contemporary challenges of managing innovations was chaired by Prof. Władysław Janasz (The University of Szczecin). The contributions were made by Prof. Andrzej Jasiński (Warsaw University), Prof. Piotr Niedzielski (The University of Szczecin), and Prof. Marek Jabłoński (Chorzów Faculty, WSB University in Poznań). Prof. Jasiński identified and discussed ‘seven deadly sins’ of innovation management in Poland. Among the negative antecedents he listed:

- domination of the public sector in financing scientific research;
- very weak R&D potential of Polish enterprises;
- excessive dependence of innovations in Polish enterprises on their own solutions which results in a low level of technological advancement;
- domination of public funds (both EU and national) in financing R&D;
- low level of funds allocated to applied R&D projects;
- low level of trust and cooperation between entrepreneurs and academia;
- perceiving R&D spending rather as costs than investments.

Prof. Niedzielski analysed algorithmic dynamic pricing as an innovation in transportation services industry. His paper was focused on pricing algorithms applied by airline low cost carriers, bus transportation operators and city transportation services. He illustrated his study with the cases of e-podróżnik.pl portal operated by Teroplan S.A. company and the dynamic pricing system used by Uber. Prof. Jabłoński

discussed innovative aspects of designing business models stimulated by such trends as (Jabłoński, 2018): increasing role of the concepts of sharing and network economies, knowledge management and intellectual capital, big data and digitization (digital economy).

The first discussion panel chaired by Prof. Krystyna Poznańska (Warsaw School of Economics) was oriented to the issues of creativity. Dr Marek Krasieński (Wrocław University of Economics) studied the potential of the employees in self-government offices to implement the suggestion system under the umbrella of Kaizen (Krasieński, 2018). He was asked to compare and contrast the continuous improvement programmes based on employee suggestions in business and public administration. Jan Maksymilian Janiszewski (Warsaw School of Economics) discussed the findings of his empirical research testing the alignment of the company policy with Lean Management and Kaizen philosophy (Janiszewski, 2018). His presentation triggered questions about procedures applied in companies to collect employee suggestions and innovative ideas and the attitude of employees to contribute to the continuous improvement programs. Jacek Woźniak (Military University of Technology) analysed risk management in project-oriented enterprises operating in creative industries (Woźniak, 2018). Discussion was focused around the issues of variety of risks experienced by these companies and entrepreneurs' approaches to manage these risks. Kamila Tomczak-Horyń (Opole University of Technology) discussed the importance of employee creativity in a manufacturing company and presented her own instrument used to survey production workers' creativity (Tomczak-Horyń and Knosala, 2018).

Cooperation was the topic of the second discussion panel chaired by Prof. Marek Szajt (Częstochowa University of Technology). Prof. Arkadiusz Świadek (The University of Zielona Góra) analysed the impact of location and relationships with stakeholders on innovations in companies operating in Wielkopolska region (Świadek, 2018). His speech induced questions about co-competition practices within surveyed companies. Dr Bartosz Marcinkowski (Poznań University of Economics and Business) presented the findings of his research on cooperation strategies of companies operating in Poland (Marcinkowski, 2018). The questions addressed to him focused on reasons standing behind not establishing cooperation and challenges and opportunities for SMEs related to inter-firm cooperation. Dr Jadwiga Gorączkowska (The University of Zielona Góra) discussed the role of institutions supporting

business on active technology transfer (Gorączkowska and Płonka, 2018). Through empirical research she confirmed that such stimulation is much more observed in case of intra-sector cooperation with business stakeholders (e.g. suppliers, customers, other companies within the structure of the capital group) rather than with the academia. Dr Tomasz Kusio (Cracow University of Economics) deliberated on the role of open innovations in SMEs (Borowiecki, Kusio and Siuta-Tokarska, 2018). He was asked about characteristics of open innovations typical of SMEs and the barriers to implement the concept in the sector of SMEs. Prof. Dariusz Nowak (Poznań University of Economics and Business) analysed the effects of inter-firm cooperation on organisational, marketing, process and product innovations (Nowak, 2018). Discussion was centred on the issues of coepetition, reciprocity relationships and their antecedents as well as opportunities and challenges for enhancing inter-firm cooperation.

The third discussion panel chaired by Prof. Bogusława Ziółkowska (Częstochowa University of Technology) was focused on the perspectives of innovation management. Prof. Wojciech Popławski and Dr Tomasz Janicki (WSB University in Toruń) presented the findings from their empirical research conducted among SMEs aimed at analysing the aspects of innovative projects management in the context of turbulent environment (Goździewska-Nowicka, Janicki, Popławski and Słupska, 2018). They were asked questions about challenges and barriers for managing highly innovative projects comparing the situation of SMEs and corporations. Dr Andrzej Lis (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) discussed the variety of innovation forms studied through the lens of the corporate social responsibility. The mapping of the research field is the first step to investigating the processes of responsible innovations in Polish companies (Lis and Sudolska, 2018). Do socially responsible companies implement responsible innovations? How should we manage responsible innovations to make their implementation efficient and effective? – these two questions guided discussion on responsible innovations. Justyna Skorupska (Kozłmiński University, Warsaw) studied the influence of the Internet on attracting customers (Skorupska, 2018). She made an attempt to identify innovative instruments used by enterprises to search for customers and the customers' approaches to reduce information noise. Aleksandra Kieres (The University of Szczecin) examined legal aspects of developing the networks of 'business angels' in Poland. She was asked to enumerate

types of investments financed by ‘business angels’ in Poland and their motivations and to explain why supporting family businesses by ‘business angels’ is not widespread in Poland.

The debates run by business practitioners were focused around the challenges faced by start-up initiatives and innovations in SMEs. The first debate entitled “Start-up, or Start-down – difficult beginnings of innovative actions” was concentrated on the issues related to the legal aspects of developing innovations and creating start-ups. The contributions were made among others by Rafał Malujda (a lawyer and the owner of Malujda & Co. Kancelaria Prawno-Patentowa), Paweł Szeremet (the coordinator of the Innovation Team in Marshal’s Office of West Pomerania region) and Marcin Pastuszek (the CEO of PQ Studio). Discussed topics covered difficulties faced by innovators as well as chances and sources of support for their initiatives, including financial aspects.

The speakers of the second debate entitled “Can small be big? – about innovations in SMEs” were Joanna Michalak and Bogusław Michalak (both from MORE Pracownia Szkoleń i Coachingu) and Mikołaj Gruszewski (the owner of Drone Design and Fotomapy Drone Design). They talked about how the passion and involvement of the owner can transform into a unique business idea and develop further. Topics in the debate included the key factors for achieving the success and how important external support is, especially for SMEs.

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