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INTRODUCTION – INFORUM MODELS FOR THE NEW EU MEMBERS

It's passed almost 40 years since Clopper Almon founded the Interindustry Forecasting at the University of Maryland (Inforum). He and his team introduce Inforum as „a research organization dedicated to improving business forecasting and government policy analysis”¹. The idea laying at the basis of Inforum is a dynamic, multisectoral model of the economy, with an input-output table as a core. Unlike the CGE models, Inforum models are solved dynamically, showing the path of growth. Parameters are estimated out of time series using econometric procedures and diagnostic typical for macromodels. Inforum model with its detailed disaggregation makes analyses not only possible at the branch level, but it produces accurate macroeconomic indicators as well.

This scheme proved to be successful, and has been adopted in several countries. Inforum-type models appeared at first in the most developed countries as they require some basic conditions to be held. Good quality of statistical sources is one of the most important. This means reliable input-output tables and other data at detailed branch level. Long time series should allow for estimation. Managing so huge model needs computer technology and computer literacy. This limitation doesn't exist now, but in the seventies and eighties it was a serious problem. And, last but not least, there needs to be a team of researchers believing in advantages of input-output methodology, willing to take a huge effort in order to make their forecasts more reliable.

During the eighties the idea of Inforum modelling spread so wide that the need for international meeting appeared. The first World Inforum Conference took place in 1993 in Rennes (France). Among models of the most important economies, the Polish model IMPEC was presented there. Since that time, every year, the ideas and new developments in multisectoral modelling are shared at the conferences, held in various parts of the world. In 1995 Inforumers were hosted

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¹ See www.inforumweb.umd.edu

by the University of Lodz. Papers published in this book were presented at the World Inforum Conferences in Suzdal (Russia, 2003) and Ascea (Italy, 2004). They were revised and updated in 2005.

The Inforum type models gain growing interest in Europe as well as all over the world. National models of this kind exist in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Switzerland. In other countries of the „old” EU, like Great Britain, multisectoral models are developed independently. „New” members show their interest and some progress can be observed. Before the accession there were two operating models in this group of countries. Polish model IMPEC dates back to the eighties, and was seriously reconstructed after changing the economic system in 1989. Hungarian model DUNA was developed in the second half of the nineties. Lately, models of Latvia and Estonia have been constructed (the state of art is presented in this book). During the long history of Inforum, teams from other countries have shown their interest in building their own models, but from unknown reasons, they have to postpone the idea. Inforum Conferences have hosted, among others, researchers from Slovakia, the Czech Republic and lately – Lithuania.

The sequence of papers follow the rule from general to detail. Josef Richter shows the main conditions and perspectives of European statistics determining the shape of the models. Reelika Parve compares frameworks used to input-output data collection in various European countries.

These two „global” papers are followed by „national overviews”, describing Estonian and Latvian models, which are in the phase of construction. Both models benefit from Maurizio Grassini’s experience with Italian model INTIMO. Tiuu Paas, who is the head of Estonian team, as well as Remigijs Pocs, Gunta Pinke and Ludis Neiders place the models in the context of current economic situation.

Detailed solutions applied to Inforum model typical for a new EU member economy are discussed in the second half of the book. These four papers concern Polish model IMPEC, which has the longest tradition, and is at present probably the most advanced model among ten countries. Jakub Boratyński gives an example of input-output methodology, while next two papers present typical „econometric” pieces of the model. Mariusz Plich together with Marcin Ponewczyński show the methodology of compiling a detailed databank and Michał Przybyliński produces final results of estimation. Iwona Świczewska and Zofia Wysocka propose a new area of investigation, which may lead to an important extension of the model.

As Josef Richter stated in his paper, “In the European Union (EU) the compilation of statistical data is to a high degree standardized and regulated.” Thus, a common, European standards of models can be worked out. This would make creating new model for European countries much easier. Soon, we may expect new teams of researchers joining the Inforum family.

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WPROWADZENIE – MODELE TYPU INFORUM DLA KRAJÓW – NOWYCH CZŁONKÓW UE

INFORUM to nazwa fundacji naukowej, działającej przy Uniwersytecie Maryland, założonej i kierowanej już od prawie 40 lat przez Cloppera Almona. Podstawowym narzędziem tworzenia analiz i prognoz gospodarczych przez ten zespół jest wielosektorowy model ekonometryczny, oparty na bilansie przepływów międzygałęziowych.

Zasady konstrukcji tego modelu zostały przejęte przez ekonomistów w innych krajach, stąd w literaturze pojawiło się określenie „modele typu INFORUM”. Początkowo zasięg oddziaływania grupy INFORUM ograniczał się do krajów wysoko rozwiniętych gospodarczo, takich jak Japonia, Niemcy, Francja czy Włochy, co wynikało z konieczności użycia odpowiednio zdezagregowanych danych statystycznych, a także zaawansowanej techniki komputerowej. Począwszy od połowy lat osiemdziesiątych bariery te stopniowo zostały przełamywane, co stworzyło możliwości nieograniczonej ekspansji filozofii modelowania wielosektorowego. W tym czasie powstał polski model IMPEC.

W 1993 r. zapoczątkowana została tradycja corocznych spotkań międzynarodowej grupy badaczy stosujących podejście INFORUM. Artykuły zamieszczone w tym zeszycie oparte są głównie na referatach wygłoszonych w trakcie konferencji INFORUM w Suzdalu (Rosja, 2003) i Ascei (Włochy, 2004). Zostały one zrewidowane i zaktualizowane w 2005 roku.

W krajach – nowych członkach Unii Europejskiej metodologia ta dopiero znajduje swoje miejsce, jednak fakt, że spotyka się ona z coraz większym zainteresowaniem pozwala oczekiwać szybkiego nadrobienia zaległości w tym zakresie.

W zaprezentowanych artykułach omawiane są problemy o charakterze ogólnym, głównie związane z układem dostępnych danych statystycznych, przedstawiają także konkretne zastosowania modeli typu INFORUM. Opisane zostały m. in. modele gospodarek Łotwy i Estonii, natomiast szczegółowe rozwiązania w zakresie modelowania wybranych zjawisk ekonomicznych przedstawia seria artykułów poświęcona polskiemu modelowi IMPEC.